



messing about in **BOATS**

Volume 27 – Number 9

January 2010

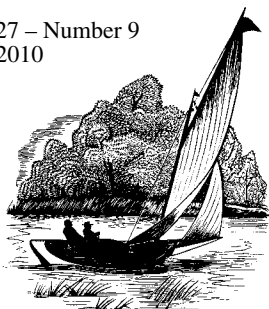
Special Features This Issue
“Quebec-Tadoussac-Chicoutimi Solo by Sea Canoe”
“The New Seagoing Dinghy”
“Red Zinger’s First Cruise”
“Building the *Elizabeth Ring*”



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Commentary...

Bob Hicks, Editor



My friend Charlie and I wrapped up our season of paddling mid-November as the warm weather just kept on coming (let's hear it for global warming!). We were out there until the week before Thanksgiving, after that holiday the water was getting too cold to fall into (we haven't done that yet, but...). From mid-October on we kept thinking each week would be the final one, but then another sunny 60s day would turn up and so off we went once more (not being locked into just weekends helps to take such advantage of good weather when it comes).

In our February 2008 issue I did a feature story ("Paddling with Charlie") on how it is being the "Geezer and the Gimp" afloat. For those who didn't see that story, suffice it to say here that Charlie is a quadriplegic with enough use of his upper body muscles to enable him to paddle a kayak, and I am just old.

We met a dozen years ago and got into bicycling with a specially-built handcycle tandem we dreamed up, more recently we segued into paddling in my double sea kayak. When Charlie got confident enough to paddle solo we were launched into our current mode. We both have 14' "sea" kayaks well suited to our interest in exploring lesser used flatwater, rivers, streams, brooks, lakes, and ponds. There is a lot of such flatwater within a two-hour drive for either of us (we live 60 miles apart, Charlie in central Worcester and I on the coastal North Shore).

You might have gathered from this that our weekly adventures are not fraught with challenges and perils. We just like to explore at leisure outdoor environments so located as to be pretty much free of intrusive signs of civilization. Amidst our Massachusetts population density this is achieved on waters that have surroundings that cannot support building; marshes, protected woodlands, flood control areas, etc. And we never meet people on our weekday outings as they are all locked up in their cubicles or standing behind their counters or machinery. So we can commune with nature afloat without jarring intrusions from people and their works.

Our adventures have two major aspects to them. The macro-adventuring is experiencing the wandering rivers or shorelines amidst the great outdoors. The micro-adventuring is examining the variety of flora and fauna we come across. There seems to be a lot of the latter, stuff I never noticed much until Charlie pointed it out to me. A couple of examples: last summer he showed me some tiny frogs (a lot of them) that were hunkered

down in some deer tracks he had spotted in the shoreline mud. In November he told me that the dragonflies, which had been with us all season in one form or another, were now down to just one species, "November Reds." Indeed, they were red.

A typical trip runs three to six miles, usually a round trip upstream and back or around the shoreline of a lake or pond. We would need two wheelchairs if we were to use the usual canoeist shuttle system, which avoids upstream paddling. The rivers we paddle have slow currents typically, if we run into any quick water we can always turn back if it gets too demanding for Charlie.

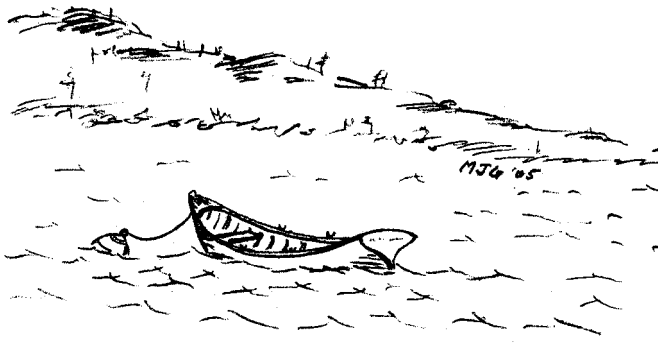
Other obstacles we sometimes encounter on the often narrow streams we paddle are beaver dams. There's no portaging for us, Charlie cannot hop out of his kayak and drag it up and over the dam, nor do so downstream either. Last winter in our shop (we meet weekly at my shop in winter to work on projects for the coming season) we designed and built a come-along set-up to pull Charlie in his kayak up over low beaver dams. We have yet to try it out, it is my contention that we do this first time at a beaver dam convenient to where we can pull out should something go amiss.

Another obstacle to access on some streams is the nature of the put-in. Getting down over steep embankments (and up later on) isn't an option with a wheelchair unless there are several of us to manhandle it (seldom the case). So we designed and built a low-rider kayak dolly fitted with fat tired wheelchair wheels, Charlie could transfer into the kayak while it was on the dolly (at the height of his chair) and then we could winch the whole stable rig down to the water (a small 12-volt car battery operated winch is part of this set-up, hook it to a trailer hitch or any nearby tree or rock) without much chance of tipover and winch it back up on return. We tried it once on a short steep narrow gully sort of access dropping maybe 6' to the water. He launched down the gully in the kayak gravity propelled on the grass and leaves and came back up later on nicely under winch power. In this instance we did not need the dolly.

Now as I write this at Thanksgiving time the kayaks are put away until mid-May when the water is again warmed up enough to resume paddling. Our interest in such modest adventuring has yet to wane so we are looking forward to 2010 to some now familiar favorite paddles as well as looking into a list of new places to explore. Life continues to be good for the "Geezer and the Gimp!"

On the Cover...

Season's end for friend Charlie and I in mid-November after two dozen or so weekly outings on local rivers, ponds, and lakes offering the illusion of being "out there" amongst our eastern Massachusetts people-packed suburbs and exurbs. We found some good stuff.



From the Journals of Constant Waterman

By Matthew Goldman

Here is your world, see to it when you can. It spills over with miracles, with death, with life, with loss, with parturition. Even now, in constrictive winter, one can find the latent bud on the maple. I canoe amid the ice floes on the river. I ply my paddle judiciously, a jagged slab of floating ice can tip me into eternity; my coat and boots will drag me to the bottom.

This world is my curriculum. If I study hard, I may earn, at last, a degree of immortality. Here the sun, the river, the wind, range about me, displaying their various tempers and proclivities. Today the chill breeze gathers her robes about her, stalks to the sea. Tomorrow the predacious gale will seize the river in his roaring jaws and shake it from its bed. On such a day, to test one's mettle is merely to play with Death. I, myself, prefer to play with Life. I shall sit by the fire in my cabin and keep my journal.

The breeze descends the river from the north. The tide shoves its imperious way up river. Wall-sized shards of snowy ice surge steadily to the sea. I slowly, patiently, work upstream to the island. The frigid water ripples by my hull. Whom does moving water not transfix? I remain as entranced as the native in N.C. Wyeth's portrait, "The Crystal Depths," who drifts alone in his birch canoe, scrutinizing those depths, his journey forgotten.

Today if I drift I regress. This afternoon I contemplate opaque depths; this river so many flashes of charcoal and pewter. These muted hills recline. The silvery limbs of the white oak implore the heavens. Each risqué gust lifts the green skirt of the hemlock to reveal her pale petticoats. A pair of black ducks arises from amid the tawny rushes. The smolder of the wintry sun smokes the quilted sky. I go in beauty.

Cycles both broad and brief amaze me. I anticipate no explanation of many. Why should I care when the river compels me, the sea commands my respect? The moss-rimmed pool in the forest shows me a vital world in miniature. It has no need to compete with the Mediterranean. You cannot find a body of water more mediterranean.

My sojourn, though brief as ten and threescore summers, assures me perception. All about, the world flaunts transition. Nothing remains the same; yet all remains. The blackbird sings but a handful of seasons; always will blackbirds trill amid the cattails. When Man has had his way with this Earth and Earth, in turn, has had her way with Man, blackbirds will return to sing of summer.

I steer my canoe through the estuary that leads to Chapman's Pond. The water runs quickly, here. I'm wary of a clutching snag and lean into my paddle to avoid it. The time for words, enunciation, comes later. This snag is now and real and lethal. Once a cottonwood leaning to her reflection in the river, now she leans to shelter the torpid carp. Now this snag can seize a dreamful waterman and feed him to that carp.

The estuary opens into the shallow, ice-clogged pond and the frozen marshes. No sign of progress accosts me. Beneath the hill, by the far shore, a lone foundation crumbles. Come summer, rambling rose will bring it beauty it never knew when it raised its unsightly ruin.

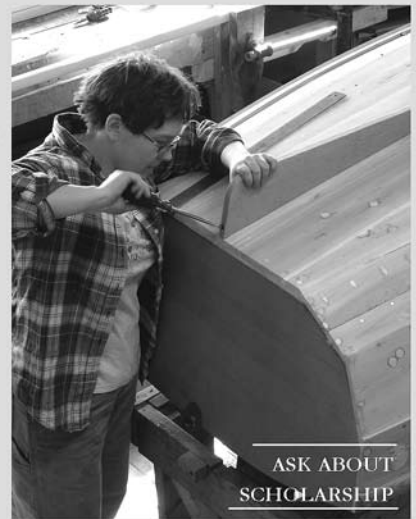
The sky, the marsh, the pond; all reach to embrace me. As I embrace them. One day I shall return to be a part of each, of all. All about, this avid world is, and was, and becomes.

From the pond two swans arise, susurrant and swishing. I hark to how their wingsong lingers as I listen. On the wind their wingsong lingers as I listen...

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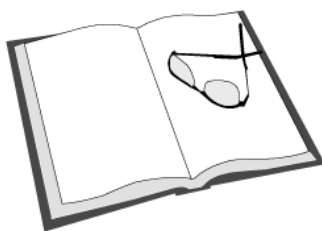
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"Reminiscences and Reflections from My Years at Sea" might be a title more descriptive of this Conrad work. It is somewhat rambling and yet nonetheless great fun to read, for it contains some of the most lyrical of any Conrad passages I've ever read. It's one of those books that would be great for a long, snowbound weekend at the cabin, something to pick up and put down without worry of losing the thread of the story.

It is, in fact, many stories. Forty-nine chapters might sound off-putting but for the fact that they're short and Conrad has organized them into thematic little groups of three or four. The book begins, for example, with a group entitled "Landfalls and Departures." In it he reminisces about the meaning, first of "departures" and later "landfalls," to the sailor (think "process" rather than "event") and recalls the circumstances of some of his own.

Another group commits four somewhat gloomy chapters to "Overdue and Missing" and begins, "Often I turn with melancholy eagerness to the space reserved in the newspapers under the general heading of 'Shipping Intelligence.'" I meet there the names of ships I have known. Every year some of these names disappear, the names of old friends." The last of these chapters relates the story of a conversation with a friend whose steamer had lost its propeller in the far reaches of the winter South Atlantic, an absolutely horrifying prospect when you think about it. "With the snapping of her tail-shaft her life seemed suddenly to depart from her big body and from a stubborn, arrogant existence she passed all at once into the passive state of a drifting log." Her second mate confessed to taking to his bed and crying, "...he could not bear the feeling of a dead ship under his



Book Review

The Mirror of the Sea

By Joseph Conrad

(Included in *The Mirror of the Sea and Within the Tides*, Doubleday, Doran & Company, Inc, New York, 1938)

Reviewed by John M. Latta

feet..." Sort of interesting, a bit depressing, and all Conrad.

Contrast that with what were, to me, the most beautiful and engaging five chapters of the book, mysteriously entitled "Rulers of East and West." These are the winds. An introduction is supplied early in this section through his remembrance of one particular gale. "It was off the Horn," is probably all Conrad needed to say but he continued, "for a true expression of disheveled wildness there is nothing like a gale in the bright moonlight of a high latitude." And continuing, "...the ship, brought-to and bowing to enormous flashing seas, glistened wet from deck to trucks; her one set sail stood out a coal-black shape upon the gloomy blueness of the air. I was a youngster then and suffering from weariness, cold, and imperfect oilskins which let water in at every seam. I craved human companionship and, coming off the poop, took my place by the side of

the boatswain (a man whom I did not like) in a comparatively dry spot where at worst we had water only up to our knees. Above our heads the explosive booming gusts of wind passed continuously..."

Thus are we introduced to the rulers of the oceans, the winds. "As a ruler, the East Wind has a remarkable stability; ...an invader of the high latitudes lying under the tumultuous sway of his great brother, the Wind of the West..." And the West Wind? "The narrow seas around these (British) isles ... are subject to the turbulent sway of the West Wind. Call it northwest or southwest, it is all one, a different phase of the same character, a changed expression on the same face."

And what of the others? "The North and South Winds are but small princes in the dynasties that make peace and war upon the sea. They never assert themselves upon a vast stage. They depend upon local causes, the configuration of coasts, the shapes of straits, the accidents of bold promontories round which they play their little part. In the polity of winds, as amongst the tribes of the earth, the real struggle lies between East and West." And thus, in a few beautifully written and very short passages, we are given to understand the basics of what we, as readers of nautical tales, need to know about the ocean's winds.

But he gives us more. "Clothed in a mantle of dazzling gold or draped in rags of black clouds like a beggar, the might of the Westerly Wind sits enthroned upon the western horizon with the whole North Atlantic as a footstool for his feet and the first twinkling stars making a diadem for his brow." We learn of his violent temper, his capriciousness, his "sense of uncontrolled power," and of his subtle mood swings, the southwesterly and the northwesterly.

But the "King of the Easterly Weather," well, he's "an interloper in the dominions of Westerly Weather, an impassive-faced tyrant with a sharp poniard held behind his back for a treacherous stab. He is extremely difficult to dislodge by the reason of his cold craftiness and profound duplicity." We learn of an instance where he held back a fleet of some 300 homeward-bound ships, all desperate to enter the English Channel, for six weeks as their provisions slowly vanished and their sailors starved.

These five small chapters on the winds are now among my favorite Conrad passages and I didn't even know they were there until I grabbed the wrong volume to read on my vacation.

Another delightful (and quite short) passage involves Conrad's own quest for youthful adventure. "...I yet longed for the beginning of my own obscure Odyssey which, as was proper for a modern, should unroll its wonders and terrors beyond the Pillars of Hercules," to the Caribbean, in fact, where he was disappointed in his quest to find romantic entanglements with enchanting island princesses. "Such was my abominable luck in being born by the mere hair's breadth of 25 centuries too late into a world where kings have been growing scarce with scandalous rapidity while the few who remain have adopted the uninteresting manners and customs of simple millionaires." He speaks for us all.

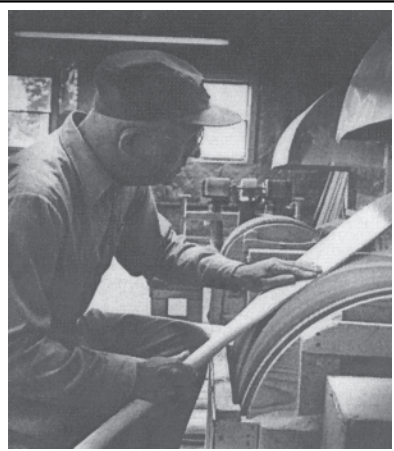
In summary, this Conrad work is uneven and sometimes uninteresting. But hidden away among its few forgettable passages are some rare gems that any lover of the sea must savor on his own palate for the sheer pleasure of the experience.

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I am writing to you about what a great experience I had with one of your advertisers. "Boaters' Cards & Stationery," owned by artist Scott Baldwin, was a pleasure to do business with. I contacted him by email and sent him some photos of our Sakkonet 23 and he did the rest. Several weeks later I received a beautiful pencil drawing of the boat (pictured) with 50 note cards and envelopes. What a good value for \$150! The framed drawing is now hung in my office and is one of my prized possessions.

Any readers with unique watercraft might find a drawing of their boat would provide the personal touch and artistry that's such boats deserve.

I also have bought two sea kayak kits from Chesapeake Light Craft. The quality is excellent and service from CLC is "First Rate."

MAIB is not just a good boat magazine but also a fine source for just about anything one needs for small craft and shallow water adventures. I subscribe to three other sailing periodicals but *MAIB* is by far my favorite.

Gary Lukoski, St Petersburg, FL



Information of Interest...

Atkin Correction

Could you run a correction on the spelling of our name to "Atkin," not "Atkins" as it appeared in your recent report on the Wooden Boat Show. Thank you.

Pat Atkin, Atkin Boat Plans, Noroton, CT

Information Wanted...

Designing 48' Sailboat

I'm in the process of designing a wood framed sailboat of 48' with a 9' beam and am looking for some ideas. I was due to be released from prison in November. I built two 26' wood

boats back in the '60s when I was a boat builder. I'm retired Navy and looking forward to going back to sea on my own sailboat.

David B. Terwilliger, 307495 Osborn, Box 100, L226 Somers, CT 06071

Building CLC Sail Rig

My ongoing project remains a set of plans as house repairs prevent me from attempting to learn all about stitch and glue epoxy construction to apply to my building a CLC Sail Rig outrigger kit. I would like to encourage anyone knowledgeable about this to email me as I would love to talk with them.

John Callahan, Dunstable, MA, jomi.callahan@gmail.com

This Magazine...

Hold the Course

I very much enjoy *MAIB* because of your personal touch and your stick-to-it-tiveness no matter what occasional detractors may say. I was brought up on the lower Chesapeake with galvanized fastenings and cotton sails, not chrome and Dacron and cockpit boozing. Best to you and hold the course, steady as you go.

Charlie Hewins, Philadelphia, PA

Editor Comments: *MAIB* continues to be a cooperative effort, we put it out every month, you, the readers, fill it up with your stories. An advantage of being the Editor/Publisher (Captain) is that I can hold whatever course I wish to and hope that you'll all come along.

See What You've Done

See what you've done, we went and bought this sailboat. It's 17'2" LOA, 15'0" LWL, 6'8" Beam, 4'3/8" Draft, weighs 750lbs with 130lb retractable keel. It has 145sf sail area.

John Engle, Remsen, NY



Put Aside

When *MAIB* arrives all other reading material is put aside. Thank you for your efforts on our behalf.

Ed Sturgis, Plainville, CT

Reflect on the Appreciation

Please have an extra coffee and muffin (with the enclosed extra) and reflect on the appreciation of the many small boat people who look forward to each issue. Thank you both, I know only one couldn't do it.

The photo is of my wife Judith and I on a Cape Cod Vikings fall foliage row ca 1997 in our Bryan boat.

Bob and Judith Yorke, Scituate, MA



What a Great Issue

What a great issue (Vol 27-No 7), well they all are. I particularly liked McCauley's "Mortar Box Boat Adventures," what a hoot. I think Bob captured many of our childhoods with that one. I've built mortar box boats, too, and had great pirate adventures in a feeder canal in the Four Corners area, New Mexico. And before New Mexico, at our hometown of Brownsville, Texas, I "helped" by brother and his friends build canoes out of corrugated tin bent up in a canoe form (kind of), nailed to bow and stern posts and a thwart in the middle and LOTS of tar, they leaked like sieves but we had fun. They would flip just thinking about it. PFDs? You gotta be kidding!

"A Canoe Cruise in Ireland" was fantastic, a real virtual adventure with this one, more, more! Reading about Bart Hawthaway reminded me of some folks I've known over the years. I really enjoyed his independence (!) of mind. As a Texas game warden I used to have a number of poachers that hunted from canoes (for deer) by canoeing down our beautiful Guadalupe River, hiding the canoe and hunting on land, trespassing, of course, that was the biggest rub, we have plenty of deer, they always had a license, and it was during legal season, but the trespass charge could be quite traumatic. But they were a hearty lot. I would launch sometime after they did and look for their hidey-holes, many good conversations and "adventures." Seeing the photo of Hawthaway with a deer in the canoe reminded me of that. I applaud Hawthaway's diet of game, very healthy.

Before the government "health agencies" stepped on us, we used to give confiscated (illegally taken) venison and fish (sea trout, redfish, and black drum) to our local nursing homes in South Texas, this was in the '70s. The residents loved it, we would make a surprise visit to see if the game and fish were getting to the residents and to our pleasant surprise, found that it indeed was! And kudos to the commercial fishermen who would help us gut and gill the illegally taken fish (from one of their own fishermen) after finding out where it was going! This was out of Port Mansfield, Texas, those same fishermen would help us look for drowning victims when no one else would in bad weather.

And even though Bluenose II is far beyond my wildest dreams of even seeing it, your article gave me a good tour of that gold-plater and I wasn't disappointed.

Ron Bennett, Comfort, TX



The Sabot, Capt. Freddie B, is a regular every year.



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27th Annual Mid-Atlantic Small Craft Festival

(Another View)

By Greg Grundtisch

This year's Mid-Atlantic Small Craft Festival was held on the first weekend in October on the beautiful grounds of the Chesapeake Bay Maritime Museum in St Michaels, Maryland. Attendance and participation were up despite the economic situation. The weather was perfect. As always, the museum staff was very friendly and helpful. It was another glorious festival. Lots of fun. Lots to see and do. Lots of interesting folks to talk boats with. Lots of boats of all types and descriptions to look at. Lots to look over around the museum. It has an extensive collection of boats, artifacts, and archives of Chesapeake Bay craft and history.

There were rowing, paddling, and sailing races for kids and adults as well as other events for kids such as a scavenger hunt and pond model building and racing. For the adults there were boat building demonstrations and workshops and discussions, both formal and informal. Several organizations attend regularly and put on demonstrations such as kayak paddling, canoe restoration, and boat building. There were also other museums represented, one all the way from Florida.

The guest speaker on Saturday evening after the awards and dinner (good eats folks!) was Andre DeBardelaben, from the Independence Seaport in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, who offered a presentation on the "re-creation" of *Silent Maid*, a 33'x12'6" catboat. His PowerPoint presentation chronicled the complete building process from beginning to launch in June of this year. To see the photos of *Silent Maid's* restoration and other projects from this organization, go to PhillySeaport.org, their website offers a lot to see. Remember *Bear* and *Bull*, the sandbaggers? Take a look.

This year there was to be Puddle Duck Racer (PDR) building and racing, as well as Mouse Boat building and racing. The Puddle Duck tent was set up for building and build they did. They finished one and raced it, and likely a second one but I couldn't stick around on Sunday to find out if it was completed. I'll bet it was. Bob Cavenagh won the first annual PDR Building award, he and his group were working from early Friday all through Saturday and Sunday to finish a second boat. There were many volunteers who also helped out. No shortage of help there. The Mouse Boat people will have to work hard next year to compete with these guys. Fear not fair mousers!

Some of us are trying to arouse interest in building and racing both PDRs and Mouseboats and any other 8' boats. The idea is to get kids, families, groups, volunteers, and all others interested to take part in any way they can to help develop an "open class of 8-footers," paddle and sail, to race close to shore in the protected cove. Trophies and such for the winners, all kids race, all girls race. You get the idea. This could grow into a big event. Google Mouseboat or Puddle Duck Racer for more about these boats.

John Ford, his staff, and the folks who volunteered did an outstanding job. They work hard out front and behind the scenes to make this event the best in the country! No exaggeration. Thanks to you all and very well done.



The Cortez Maritime Museum from Florida brought up their restored Cuban refugee boat.



Little Vermonster cradle boat built by Brian Carlson won the Dry Dock Class Award.

Kevin Mc Donald's Marsh Cat, a Joel White design.





A rowing race lines up, sea canoe in foreground sports a canine crew member.



Light air for the sailing race.



Puddle Duck Racers building tent with first build on its side ready to race.



Wooden Canoe Heritage Association display.



Delaware's *Kalmar Nickle's* ship's boat is another regular.



The tiny boat under tow in foreground won special "Tow Behind Award". In background is the "re-created" Philadelphia Museum catboat, *Silent Maid*.

On the docks and on the shore, over 200 small craft all in one place at the same time, an incredibly diverse selection of the boats we love.



The Weir river race is held every year at the end of October in Hull, Massachusetts. It is a 5.5-mile race starting up the Weir River and heading out into open water across Hull Gut.

I showed up early at the Hull DPW compound where the start line is to register at about 8:15. I was the first one there and a little nervous. This was my first race as a single rower. There were some DPW guys around who knew nothing about a race that day but soon enough Ed McCabe and a couple of volunteers were there to set up. With their help we carried my boat into the reeds at the start line and I left to bring my trailer over to the finish at the boathouse where I thought I would catch a ride back.

After parking my trailer right at the beach I got my first view of the conditions in the gut. I was not the only one standing around scratching my head with a look of uncertainty on my face. At this point the winds were about 12mph gusting to 20mph or so, challenging but doable for most craft.

I got a ride back to Nantasket Pier with my friends and teammates from Saquish Rowing who had brought three of their mighty pilot gigs with them. They were all in good moods and had an air of confidence about them. I, on the other hand, had forgotten to eat and the butterflies were beginning to gurge.

The gigs had all put in at Nantasket Pier and were going to row the 1.5 miles or so to the start at the head of the Weir. I jumped in and was rowed over which gave me a chance to check out the first part of the course. I had rowed this race the year before in a coxed gig, but "eyes in the boat" at all times does not allow for much sightseeing so it was all new to me.

We all hung around at the start waiting for the coxswains meeting that was supposed to start at 10:15am but could not as road construction and detours had held up some crews. About 11am the meeting started as Ed McCabe took the high ground by standing on top of one of those giant snow removal blades that was leaning up against a building. As the meeting progressed and the wind picked up

The Wild Weir River Race of '09

By Pete Smith



even more there was one gust that just about knocked Ed off his perch to which a little nervous chuckling arose from the crowd. I thought that the race might be called off or shortened to keep the boats in more protected waters. Instead, Ed proceeded to explain what to expect when you pass Lands End and reach open water. "Ten feet past the point you will hit the wall..." He wasn't kidding.

I was #4 as the singles headed out first. I slid my boat into the river and spent the next 20 minutes or so jockeying for position at the start. It was oddly quiet and serene as we sat protected from the wind. I felt good.

At 30-second intervals we were off. I settled into a nice pace and took note of those around me as gaps were already beginning to open and close between the boats. Lots of spectators lined the shore and I remember thinking how pretty it was with the fall colors and all.

At about the one-and-a-half-mile mark came the first real indicator of what lay ahead. We were on the lee of the shore and still well protected as the mouth of the river opened up, but I remember noticing two things as I took a moment to look around. The giant wind turbine was turned sideways (wait a minute, we were supposed to have a tailwind). Looking up at the top of the trees at Lands End confirmed it was going to be a cross wind.

My boat is an 18' wooden lapstrake traditionally built double ender from Halifax, Nova Scotia. With a low freeboard and with one rower she is not perfectly balanced as the bow sits down a bit. This causes the wind to toss the stern about, even in a light breeze. She is built to accommodate a rudder, which I decided to use to help keep her on track and soon learned how helpful it would be. It allowed me to apply pressure with both oars, I could adjust the rudder accordingly using ropes connected to the rudder that I could tie off to cleats on the thwart in front of me.

As soon as I hit Ed's wall at the tip of Lands End I could see that a couple of boats had already turned back. My first thought was that the course had been shortened and that they were being turned around by the chase boat that I could see at the channel marker, but a couple of hundred yards later I realized this was not the case as the guys in the chase boat gave me that "it is up to you" look.

After a moment's consideration I decided to proceed. My thought was, what is the worst that can happen? So I get wet and they have to pull me from the drink! It was 72 degrees as this tropical wind started to bear down even harder. It was then I realized how much fun I was having. Then when one

of the bigger waves of the day slapped me broadside, I lost my rudder off its mounts and had to retrieve it by pulling it in with the ropes. I had no way to re-attach it. I knew things were about to get interesting. The National Weather Service recorded that day sustained winds at 36mph with gusts up to 47mph, peaking at 12:30pm, which is roughly when I lost my rudder.

One of the Saquish gigs rowed past me confidently but another I had watched had turned back. I had a Little River Marine open water shell with outriggers in my sights and was feeling determined to catch him. But without my rudder I found I could not track straight towards the finish but had to tack into the wind at intervals. Even pulling only on the port side oar I was being pushed off line.

It was the final stretch, about a mile left to go and no letting up from the wind or the waves. By now I had a few inches of water in the boat which added considerable weight, which I believe helped me at this point. A few hundred yards later I was feeling strong and was looking to finish hard. I powered up and did a hard pull while letting out a loud grunt. My bronze portside oar lock broke. I fell backwards into the boat and saw out of the corner of my eye my oar disappear over the side. By the time I got to my knees and looked around I could not at first see my oar and had all of a sudden this overwhelming feeling of disappointment.

But then there it was, by this time a hundred yards away. I scrambled to the stern of the boat while grabbing the remaining oar and began to paddle in an effort to retrieve my oar and my chances of finishing the race. The chase boats were on me but kept their distance as I frantically tried to catch up with my oar that the wind was pushing me away from as I paddled away from the finish line. I almost yelled to the chase boat for help thinking I could not get to it but thought that might disqualify me from the race. The wind was howling, I was kneeling in the stern as the bow stuck up out of the water.

It seemed like an eternity but I finally retrieved my oar. I luckily had with me an extra oarlock and was able to settle into the stern seat for the final push to the finish which was now much closer as the tide and wind had brought me within a half mile of the beach. I rowed hard up onto the beach, jumped out of the boat, looked back at the water, and realized that I had just had the most fun I have ever had with oars. Brandishing my mangled oarlock and telling my story to those who had witnessed my troubles, I knew that it was my trophy for the day.

Sixty boats showed up to race that day, the largest flotilla yet for the Weir River Race. However 11 decided not to put in, leaving 49 boats to start the race. Of those 49 only 20 finished, leaving 29 boats littered up and down the coast at various locations with, I am told, at least one sea rescue having been made.



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Rowing on the Quabbin

25 Years Ago
in MAIB



By Steve Grimes — Reprinted from Jim Thayer's *Thole Pin*

For years I had been intrigued by the large wilderness of water in the middle of my home state of Massachusetts. The Quabbin Reservoir is an ambitious public works project of the 1930s. It is operated and maintained by the Metropolitan District Commission (MDC) and has always, for me, been a vaguely mysterious and unattainable place. The lake and its surrounding watershed are the only wilderness in Massachusetts; as if to prove this there were, at last count, some 25 bald eagles living there. I resolved to see an eagle from my Express.

A few calls to the MDC revealed that the Quabbin is open to use by sport fishermen, for whose pleasure the lake is annually stocked with trout and bass at unknown cost to the taxpayers of the Commonwealth. Motorboats under 20hp may be launched at two ramps and the MDC maintains a fleet of aluminum rental fishing boats with motors for day fishing; camping or landing anywhere but the launching spots is prohibited and strictly enforced. In addition, canoes are prohibited and sailing not allowed; in fact, all recreational use of the lake except sport fishing is illegal. I couldn't actually believe that this could be true and decided to stick by the rules and see what happened (one is allowed to fish from rowboats).

My friend Frank Linton and I set aside a weekend and prepared our "Fishing Trip" (with the secret intention of seeing an eagle). At least one person in the boat must have a Massachusetts fishing license and fishing tackle. Got it? Check. So on the morning of our preparation we showed up with the Express in the van at the parking lot filled with pickup trucks with bass decals on their doors and various outdoor looking types with boots and fishing tackle hats, all with "Who the hell are these guys?" looks on their faces. After convincing the MDC attendant in charge that we had a rowboat and not a canoe and that we had a fishing license and tackle and met all the qualifications they had to let us go out on the water. We set oars and rapidly left our hostile reception. Setting sail seemed decidedly inappropriate and we did not do so.

The lake is large, marvelous, and wild, the water clear and pure, and the air clean and fresh. After a mile or so, distancing ourselves from the few fishermen, we set sail and enjoyed about three quarters of an hour of uneventful sailing, being sure to keep our fishing pole up and the line trolling. To show we were really in the spirit of things, when the wind slackened we even anchored and actually caught a couple of small perch and an undersized bass which we threw back. Ho Hum. We noticed that an airplane flying high over the lake seemed to change course to observe us when we had our sail set. Assorted comments from the occupants of the planing motorboats drifted downwind to us:

"They don't allow sailing here..." "How did those guys get out here..." "Those guys are crazy, wait'll a storm comes up..." I relished the feeling that we were invading someone's private club.

And we saw an eagle!! Not a hawk, not a crow, not a seagull, but an honest to goodness eagle. A large bird with split feathered wing tips soaring and circling within a quarter mile of us; we both watched through the glasses and enjoyed this once in a lifetime treat. We wondered of what benefit tangled monofilament line was to their survival. It was worth it, we couldn't tell if anyone else noticed the eagle, we had selected a spot where the fishing must have been bad and the nearest fishing boats were at least two miles away.

By this time we had rowed and sailed six or seven miles and wanted to be sure not to be caught out after the 7:00 curfew so we headed back to the launch ramp, prepared to tolerate the increased concentration of anglers. About halfway back we were overhauled by a sleek MDC police launch with antennae and radios crackling and ordered alongside. He courteously advised us that we had been spotted sailing by MDC air surveillance and that while it was his personal opinion that sailing was OK it was his duty to advise us of the rules; we did not have sail set at the time but admitted to having been sailing earlier.

He checked out our fishing licenses and safety gear and asked how we got on the lake to which we replied with our launch ramp re-

ceipt stub which seemed to genuinely surprise him. He took our names and addresses, cautioned us against sudden storms, and turned in his report on the radio, overhearing his report revealed that we had caused quite a furor on the lake and that they had been looking for us for over an hour! We rowed undisturbed along the shore enjoying the advancing afternoon light, the wilderness shore, and the smell and taste of the wonderfully clean, sweet water.

Nearing the launch ramp with an hour to spare before curfew, we anchored again and fished and relaxed. The MDC attendant who had ruled in our favor that we had a rowboat and not a canoe motored out to us and lamented that we had caused quite a stir by sailing on the lake and that he had gotten in trouble with his superiors for letting us on the lake and asked that we not do it again.

So if you want to have the chance to seeing an eagle and the certainty of enjoying some wonderful wilderness, get yourself a copy of the MDC rules, a fishing license, some fishing tackle, and give them hell. I think that non-motored recreational use of the Quabbin with clean boats would not be discouraged. If anything I think the rule would be more environmentally benign to have no fishing, only eagle watching!! A no motor rule would certainly help keep the traffic down if that were a problem. I encourage anyone willing to put up with a little BS to enjoy a lot of wilderness to make a point of showing up on the Quabbin and demonstrating that wilderness observation is a clean and legitimate use of this wonderfully maintained resource.

Editor Comments 2009: *The apparent conflict between preserving the pristine water quality on the Quabbin for Boston's water supply (90 miles away) and emphasizing motorboat use on the water is due to the fact that many fishermen and hunters from the rural areas of the state are elected to the General Court (state legislature). Long ago, legislation establishing the rules and regulations governing use of the Reservoir took into account their interests. These rules have nothing to do with preservation of the resource's natural environment.*

Ten years ago I paddled along the entire south shore of the St Lawrence from near Montreal, past Quebec, and around the big Gaspé Peninsula back to New Brunswick, along the edge of the Appalachian Mountain Range. So I thought it might be fitting and interesting ten years later to check out the north shore of the St Lawrence, along the edge of the Laurentian Shield from Quebec City to Tadoussac and then up the Saguenay Fjord to Chicoutimi, which I also had wanted to see for quite some time.

As then, it was my birthday present from my family, my 70th now, and Nancy was again sweet enough to car shuttle me to my put-in in Quebec and pick me up at Chicoutimi at the end of my trip. Thanks, my dear, I really appreciate it!

Part One: Down the St Lawrence to Tadoussac

The summer of 2009 had been very wet, foggy, cold, and windy and continued like that for the entire duration of my trip. I set up my boat on a tiny beach near the Levis ferry to downtown Quebec City between rain showers on the morning of July 22, 2009. The tide was just turning, which looked very promising for my downriver trip. As expected, though, crossing over the main arm of the river to Orleans Island and the north shore turned into my first test. I had to dance in the strong, breaking tidal rips caused by the 4kt ebb stream and a strong 15kt opposing NE wind. It got me wet for the rest of the day but I felt good that I had not lost it over the winter and being 70 years old.

My goal for the trip was again about 20 nautical miles per day, or about 22.5 statute miles, following the shoreline, going point to point. After six hours the shore at low tide, so it seemed, had moved farther and farther into the river. One- to two-mile wide mud or mostly rock flats extended out from the bank, making landing very difficult. For my first overnight I, therefore, decided to ascend the St Anne River near Beaulieu, often lining my boat over the shallows. I thought I had finally found a spot above the high water mark, but when the tide came rushing back in I had to break camp and move even higher upriver, where I was able to pull out and pitch my little tent on someone's riverfront lawn. Fortunately for me, the owner did not mind.

The Tides in the St Lawrence

I knew then that taking out at the end of each day's paddle would be a problem all the way to Tadoussac, but that could not be helped – PORTAGE! Canadian canoeists

Quebec–Tadoussac–Chicoutimi

Solo by Sea Canoe

By Reinhard Zollitsch



I am off from Quebec/Levis.

seem to be very fond and proud of this character-building pastime, but not I. Anyway, the next day would take me through and around a large bird sanctuary along Cape Tourmente, the area where each fall thousands of snow geese gather for their flight south. I saw none at this time of year, just a few Canada geese, ducks, terns, and gulls and an occasional eagle or raven.

I kept paddling, hoping for a possible take-out, but there was none. Instead, I saw miles and miles of extensive boulder fields and "rock gardens." After 9:20 hours in my boat I finally found a steeper Maine-like shore at Cap de la Baie, at the mouth of St Paul's Bay. I had gone 33.5 miles, my longest daily paddle ever. I was bushed but still felt confident I could clamber up to the tiny, tent-sized brushy rock perch with my gear, but decided to let the slowly incoming tide carry my empty boat up there, about 18 feet.

After my usual BDS (brief daily swim) and coffee as well as cocoa, I noticed I was right across from Isle-aux-Coudres, which was named "isle-es-Coudres" by Jacques Cartier in 1535 (his second trip to the New World) after the many hazelnut trees ("coudres-coudriers") there. The large island creates a sharp bend in the North Channel of the Seaway, forcing all ships real close by my

shore. At night that bend was even illuminated with a string of lights marking the center line of the shipping lanes, just like on our freeways on shore.

From my 1999 trip down the St Lawrence I also remembered that the tides were not as regular as in New England, but that one high tide, mostly the morning tide, was one foot higher than the other. So I made sure I left myself a one-foot margin of safety for my camp. And sure enough, at 6:00am the tide was almost kissing my tent. Time to pack up and be gone, which was distinctly easier than landing here.

Fog and rain and more rock flats the next day until I reached the breakwater at St Irene, 24.5 miles downriver near the mouth of Malbaie Bay. There was a nice level pebble beach which made portaging much easier than the day before, but it was still a very long, arduous haul to get my gear and boat up above the high tide mark.

On the Edge

Strong wind warnings and a thunderstorm around supper time were the usual fare of my NOAA weather report, but I was off again at the usual 6:00am. The tide was ebbing very hard into Malbaie Bay, three knots on my chart, and I had to watch my step. But I could not possibly imagine what was waiting for me on the other side of the bay at Cap-a-l'Aigle. Before I realized what was coming, I was in it, and with the steep shores on my left there was no way to get out. I was headed for a tidal rip the likes of which I had never seen, with humongous, steep, and confused, 6'-8' breaking waves. "OH NO!" I yelled, looking for the TV control to switch channels or turn off that dam machine. But life has no such control buttons. I was in it for dear life, fighting each wave as it broke over my deck, whumped me in the chest, and even hit me big time in the face and over my head. I was working feverishly to keep my boat running straight, accelerate over the crests, punch through the breaking tops, and brace in anticipation of the slammers and side-slewings.

And all that with only "half a paddle" a sea kayaker would say, a 50", bent-shaft canoe racing paddle. But it was light, only 10 ounces, and I was quick, but very much on the edge, even more so than last year along the West Coast of Newfoundland. But this time I could at least see what was coming, it was gnarly, menacing, and downright scary but I had seconds to get ready for each of the breaking waves.

It seemed I was caught in this tidal rip forever, until I finally managed to duck be-

Rocky perch at Cap de la Baie.



Isle aux Coudres out my window.





Rocks, rain, and fog along the St Lawrence.



Looking up the Saguenay Fjord from Petit Saguenay.

hind a ledge wall, which turned out to be the Cap-a-l'Aigle yacht club entrance. I breathed a big sigh of relief, mumbled a couple of thank yous and pulled out on the beach just outside the breakwater. I was physically and mentally spent; I was done for the day after only ten miles. I even considered aborting my entire trip here. This trip was supposed to be a fun trip, I had told myself before I started, no nightmarish survival situations, I reminded myself. So I quietly beached my boat, bailed out, dried my clothes, and tried to distract my mind with some easy, fun reading by Clive Cussler and lots of hot chocolate.

I holed up for the rest of the day feeling very small. High wind warnings from the NE for the next day did not buoy my spirits either. However, I decided to wait making any drastic decision and see what tomorrow would bring.

Back in the Saddle Again

Thick fog, a gentle drizzle, and a light easterly wind greeted me the next morning and I was off again at the usual 6:00am. I had to get back on my horse. I hated the thought of giving up. I only hoped "the eagle" of Cap-a-l'Aigle would not swoop down on me again. Instead I saw my first pod of white beluga whales while rounding Cap Saumon (Cape Salmon) when the fog lifted for a moment. They surfaced repeatedly off the big lighthouse on the point while a small mink was swimming ashore, just feet away from my boat. That made me smile again.

I made it fine to the St Simeon/Riviere du Loup ferry terminal and felt very accomplished. Three miles further on I found a small gravel beach in Anse de la Ciboulette (Chives Bay), just before Pointe aux Quilles (Keel Point, I love those descriptive French place names). Twenty miles in 5:20 hours, I was back on my bucking bronco.

That afternoon I heard several mighty, deep-throated fog whistles of the huge bulk carriers and container ships steaming up and down the St Lawrence Seaway. I never saw the big ships, even though I was so close, I could hear the breathy drop-off at the end of each whistle blow, "Whoah-aw!" More fog, rain, and strong winds predicted for tomorrow. What else is new on the St Lawrence? But I will make it to Tadoussac now. I was very confident.

The Rock Flats, "Battures" of St Catherine's Bay

My next big obstacle were the extensive rock flats (not mud flats) in St Catherine's Bay just before the entrance to the Saguenay Fjord at Tadoussac. They are seven miles long and extend four miles out into the river and are bone dry at low tide. And along its outer edge my chart indicated wicked tide rips. Crossing the "battures" needed careful planning, I was not going to be caught outside, for sure! I figured I had to get up even earlier and be on the water at 5:00am. I would then have to buck the incoming tide for two hours, and paddle three hours of the ebb tide in order to cross the flats at half tide. That should work, I hoped.

The thick fog that morning posed an extra challenge, adding a lonely, eerie feeling to the run, but all worked out as planned. The incoming tide, however, was very strong again so that I barely made it around Cap de la Tete au Chien (Doghead Point) and two more points (Raven and Basque Point). But I finally made it to Pointe Noire (Black Point) at the mouth of the Saguenay Fjord. By then it was ebbing so hard (seven knots according to my chart) I could not even make it up to the ferry dock.

I turned around and found a beach in St Catherine's Bay before that, too, ran dry. More rain and thunderstorms in the afternoon. Ah well, I did not care, I had made it to Tadoussac! I looked at the harbor, which Jacques Cartier had visited in 1535 and which became the first European trading post in the new world (set up by Pierre de Chauvin in 1600). But I especially visualized Samuel de Champlain sailing up the fjord to Chicoutimi in 1608, hoping to find a route to "the saltwater sea up north," James and Hudson Bay. I also looked hard to see the "tadoussacs," the two breast-like rounded hills the place was named for by the natives, but did not see anything resembling that female anatomy. I decided instead that early inhabitants as well as early sailors and traders must have been in the woods or at sea too long and that this whole thing was nothing but wishful thinking. The Grand Tetons in the Rocky Mountains on the other hand...

Part Two: Up the Saguenay Fjord to Chicoutimi

One hundred thirty-three miles done, 75 more miles to go! What a sweet thought, provided the wind did not pipe up from the NW. The easterlies of the last couple of days would be nice, real nice, but please not 20-30kts! Early the next morning I had to feel my way into the fjord with the flood tide. The fog was so thick I could not see the opposite shore. As a matter of fact, I had to steer a compass course

from point to point whenever I was not directly touching the steep granite walls on my left. At mile 10 the current turned and I was bucking a rather strong ebb tide, eddy-hopping from rock-outcropping to rock-outcropping in order to make it up to mile 23.5.

As a matter of fact, the higher I paddled up the fjord, the more I noticed the warmer surface river water out of huge St Jean Lake "ebbing" all the time, while the colder, heavier ocean saltwater must have been settling at the bottom of the deep fjord (up to 276 meters, about 830'), mostly just lifting the freshwater layer on the surface. So if I were to paddle the Saguenay again, I would definitely choose to paddle down from Chicoutimi to Tadoussac and not the way I was doing it now.

I had picked a small gravel beach/ramp at the Petite Saguenay River, just outside the national park, to be legal. There also was a public road to the point and tourists were stopping by to admire the views all afternoon. "Wow! Look!" Click went the camera shutter, and moments later they drove off again. Then two ski-dos and a couple of four-wheelers, all driven by over-sized local youths, tore up the tranquility of this unique geological place. The engine noises reverberated mightily for a good two hours from the steep granite walls while they churned up the quiet waters of the fjord or tore up the mud/rock flats. I had to stuff pieces of wet Kleenex into my ears and was eager to move on tomorrow.

My satellite phone worked flawlessly, though, even in the tight, steep-walled fjord. My new SPOT satellite GPS locator, on the other hand, was a disaster and never really worked. It was supposed to send my location to email addresses of family members and friends at home, but all they and I got was a road map where X marks the spot. Each time I endlessly watched the little doo-hickey blink at me, but no real action, no real transmission. It took about six to eight minutes to finally send the locator message. (What good would that do in a 911 emergency situation?!) "Tracking" did not work at all, not even as a locator. It goes back!

At 5:30 the next morning I saw my first sunrise of the entire trip. What a difference the sun makes! The fjord was calm and very still. Here and there a few fog clouds seemed to be hung up on the higher ridges and points along shore, rising in places to almost 500 meters (1,500 feet). Otherwise I saw mostly bare granite walls or steep slopes covered with very dense, green, and narrow-shouldered spruces. There was hardly any deadwood as in our Maine woods.



Cap Eternite.



Cap Trinite.

I made it easily (for once) past Cap Eternite and Cap Trinite, maybe the most spectacular area of the entire fjord, to Anse du Gros Ruisseau (Big Brook Cove). I had chosen this spot because I expected a small sand or gravel beach or silt deposit at the outflow of the big brook. And I was right. Even better, the Park had established a few wooden platforms there for river travelers to camp on. I appreciated that, especially when I was hit with yet another thunderstorm and torrential rains in the late afternoon.

I again had a very early start without breakfast and a long portage to the water's edge in order to catch what there was of the incoming tide. But as you know, I am a minimalist and two granola bars on the run with plain water were just fine with me, as long as I could go with the flow.

The fjord was widening suddenly and the steep rock walls moved back somewhat and became lower, allowing houses to crowd in along shore. I had to smile when I crossed Ha! Ha! Bay. Last year I had camped at Ha! Ha! Point at another Ha! Ha! Bay in Newfoundland. This arm here would dead end at an industrial harbor, Port Alfred. (I had read that "Ha! Ha!" was derived from an old French word meaning "Dead End," which would make sense in both instances.) My trip was distinctly winding down as I entered the last arm to Chicoutimi.

I had one more overnight on a small pocket beach in La Grande Anse (The Big Bay). I arrived at about high tide and felt that

my spot for my tent would allow even for the usual one-foot tidal fluctuation of the St Lawrence. But at 11:00pm., the waves were gently lapping against my tent and the water was still rising. Gear bags, sleeping bag, and pad as well as the entire set-up tent got tossed onto the rocks behind me while I perched on a ledge in the moonlight, wearing my head net to ward off the mosquitoes. What a way to spend the last night of your trip, I thought to myself. At midnight, though, the tide had turned enough for me to move my tent and gear back to my old location. The night was short, but sleep came very easy.

The Pick-up and Happy Encore

Only 12 more miles to Chicoutimi! No problem, no matter how bad the weather would get. I remembered the end of my 2007 trip from Lake Ontario to Quebec, where I had left myself 21 miles for the last day and was hit by a 25kt headwind. I almost missed my pick-up and my date with Nancy in the fancy hotel, the Chateau Frontenac. Did I ever work hard to get to that take-out spot!

On this trip, 11:00am on July 31, 2009, was our target time to meet up at the public boat ramp at the Chicoutimi Yacht Club. I was right on time and so was Nancy. What a wonderful sight that was, a smiling Nancy, camera in hand, and the car parked right beside the boat ramp. Hugs and kisses, a quick gear transfer, the boat on the roof rack... and off we were, back down to Tadoussac for a couple of days of happy R&R in the famous, tradition-

al Grand Hotel Tadoussac. And yes, we again visited the Chauvin/Champlain trading post, went in the picturesque little "Indian Church," and enjoyed the spectacular boardwalk from the harbor around Pointe de l'Islet to the fjord entrance. Even a few whales showed up to make this moment perfect.

Our return trip to Maine took us via ferry from St Simeon, 15 miles across the St Lawrence River to Riviere du Loup and on Canada's superhighways down to the crown of Maine and then back home to Orono. Another successful trip, consisting of 133 hard tide-ridden miles down the St Lawrence with hardly any place to take out at low tide, and 75 spectacular miles up the Saguenay Fjord. Two hundred eight miles/333 km in ten days, not bad for a 70-year-old geezer, I thought to myself. But in the future I will try even harder to stay out of those nasty tidal rips... if only I knew where they would materialize. One to two hundred yards of 6'-8' breaking tidal waves are no fun, folks, believe me.

Well, we'll see what next year brings. Enjoy!

Reinhard reinhard@maine.edu, www.ZollitschCanoeAdventures.com

Info

- Boat and gear: 17'2" Verlen Kruger SEA WIND sea canoe (www.krugercanoes.com)
- 10oz carbon fiber bent-shaft marathon-racing canoe paddle by Zaverla (www.zre.com)
- NOAA paper charts for the entire area (no GPS)

More rocks and steep shores.

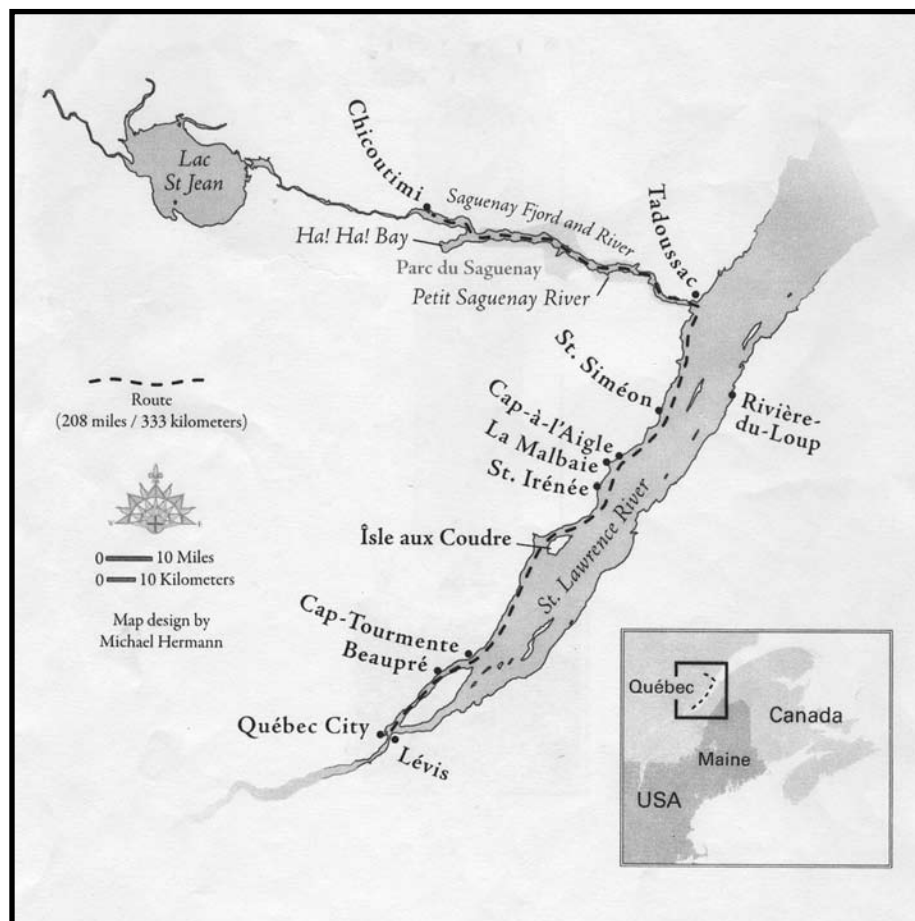


Arrival at Chicoutimi.



- Iridium satellite phone (for daily safety check-ins at home, worked great, even in the steep fjord)
- SPOT, GPS locator (a disaster, "tracking" never worked, a total waste)
- VHF radio telephone (for weather reports and contacting Coast Guard and other boats)
- Luneburg lensatic passive radar reflector by WEST MARINE (so I show up on other boats' radar)
- Six-foot bicycle wiggle stick with orange flag (on stern, so other boats can see me better)
- Two 10 liter (2.5gal) water bags by MSR-DROMEDARY (enough water for the entire trip)
- Camping gear (including one-burner propane stove, all canned foods, etc, from home) for beach camping (no official campgrounds or marinas)
- Expenses: Food and propane tank from home, car shuttles and R&R with Nancy
- No sponsors, no stress, no obligation

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You can set your watch by the winds on Yellowstone Lake. Every day in the late summer, about 8am, the all-night east breeze gives way to a morning northerly wind, 10 knots or so. At noon the winds start gyrating madly, Elvis-hips-ishly, and all points of the compass are thoroughly represented. By 1pm they settle into the afternoon southwest wind, up to about 20 knots, and at 4pm the thunderstorms arrive with rain, hail, lightning, thunder, and 40+ gale winds. In 1838 Francis Beaufort, trying to define the wind, would have called it Force 8 conditions. The surface of the lake is instantly whipped to a froth with streamers spraying off the 3' wave crests. All is a maelstrom. By 7pm it quickly settles back down and is millpond calm for the rest of the evening.

Sailing a small 15' boat in these conditions would be terrifying if it weren't for the predictability. Like having your crazy uncle at Thanksgiving dinner, you know what to expect and can plan accordingly. We only goofed once. The second day out the storm caught us out on the water and we didn't make it into our little harbor until 4:30pm. We pulled in white-knuckled, breathing hard, and thoroughly chastened for our ignorance. Lesson learned, not to be repeated. *Sirocco* is a stable little boat with a sloop rig, steel centerboard, and a tiny cabin only big enough for gear storage. She handled all these conditions very well.

My neighbor Steve and I were out there for eight days. Loaded with camping gear and an inflatable kayak up under the bow, we launched *Sirocco* at Grant Village in the West Thumb and sailed for two days east and south across the lake and down to the tip of the Southeast Arm. This is one of the most remote corners of Yellowstone Park (and maybe even the nation...) where motorboats are not allowed and true wilderness is near total. We were camping on shore, moving every day or two.

We had moored *Sirocco* in a protected bay and paddled our kayak across three miles to a trail access point. We saw a family of otters sleekly swimming along in front of us, and lost count of the bald eagles we saw, and as we pulled into that bay we saw an osprey on a snag looking intently at the water below. In a moment, she hopped up off the branch, hovered for a moment, and dive-bombed into the water, came up with a cutthroat trout in her talons, and flew directly over us to perch back on the snag for dinner.

Under bluebird skies we hiked to South Arm and as we entered a vast meadow we saw a pack of wolves trotting across and out of sight, four blacks and one gray, absolutely

Sirocco, Steve, and a ton of gear.



The Duckling That Came in From the Rain A Yellowstone Lake Odyssey

By Kyle Williams



brehtaking in their strength and beauty. As we hiked back to the kayak to paddle back to camp we stopped to visit John and Alf, who we had bumped into back in Salt Lake City and knew were going to be camped somewhere near here. It was 3pm and we knew we couldn't count on being across the water to our camp before the 4pm storm so we hunkered down and waited. Black clouds were building and we didn't have to wait long.

The afternoon storm show fired up right on schedule and we had a ringside seat on the bluff above the lake. We had foul weather gear with us but the rain was more ferocious than normal, pounding the ground around us and wild winds ripping, so John pitched a tarp for us to hunker down under and drink hot soup he so graciously offered. The rain was blowing horizontally so the tarp lean-to was perfect protection. That is, until the wind



Steve, Kyle, John, and the Taj Mahal "yurt."

shifted 180 degrees and we had to hustle to rig another tarp in the mirror image of the first, making a fine-looking nylon yurt.

As we sat there enjoying the storm in all its wonder, a baby duckling suddenly appeared under the corner of the tarp, apparently lost, looking for momma, and as grateful as we were to be out of the storm. No country for old men, or cold ducks. He was shivering. I didn't know ducks ever got cold! For heaven sakes, they swim around in water surrounded by ice, seemingly immune to the cold, but this little guy didn't look comfy at all. I tried to catch him to tuck him into a warm cap but he scampered off and disappeared into the brush.

After a few hours the storm softened just a bit and we got out to stretch our legs. Just then we saw the duckling swimming out the narrow mouth of the bay, out into lake, which surely meant certain death for him, either from the still-raging waters or from the eagles that cruise overhead with a sharp lookout for such a morsel. The circle of life. He was duck-paddling strong and squalling loud to attract momma when we lost sight of him for the last time. Fair thee well, my fine-feathered friend! By 8pm the wind and waves had subsided enough to allow us back on the water safely and we paddled into our camp long after dark, ready for a long rest and warm bed, grateful for the kind hospitality of our new friends.

The week passed quickly, with days filled with sailing, paddling, and hiking. We paddled up the Yellowstone River delta, surprising a huge bull moose browsing on the shore-side willows, and checked out a 10' high beaver lodge. I'll bet it was more luxurious inside than our tents!



Giant beaver lodge.

We saw many bear tracks in the mud on the shore but we didn't see a bear all week. One day in camp I was off on a hike (looking for bears) and as I came back Steve asked, "Did you see it?" "See what?" "A grizzly bear walked right past our camp, drank from

Sirocco on the beach.





Bear tracks.

the lake, and walked right on back into the trees." I'm still not sure I believe him, he can be a bit of a joker sometimes, but he sure seemed earnest about it so I gotta report that "we" saw a bear.

We practiced "bear safety" with a zeal bordering on religiosity. Sleep way over there, cook way over here, don't allow any food mess to remain, and put everything, including our clothes we ate in, into the bag to pull up into the tree tops every night. A kayaking Ranger named Jacki stopped by regularly to make sure that every camp on the lake was obeying the rules. She had to leave us a nice nasty note one day, as we had failed to string a bucket up the pole one day. Once a bear tastes human food, then no one in the area is safe until that bear is removed far away or killed. Usually killed, eventually, because it will find its way back and resume a life addicted to marshmallows and top ramen.

Ready to head out, with two days of sailing left between us and French fries and hot showers, we had the boat packed for an early start, hoping to catch the remnants of the nightly east wind which would have been perfect for sailing on a beam reach up and out of the Southeast Arm. We rowed out into the bay to hoist sail and drop the centerboard and we discovered that our centerboard wouldn't drop. Stuck up in its trunk! We had been dragging her up onto the pea-gravel beach overnight and pebbles had jammed the centerboard tightly inside the trunk, preventing it from dropping. ARGH!! Back to shore we went and we careened her over, pulling on the main halyard to hold her on her side with her underbelly exposed and I spent the next hour in waist deep water with a stubby screwdriver prying out the pebbles. Next time a long skinny metal hook will be in the tool kit.

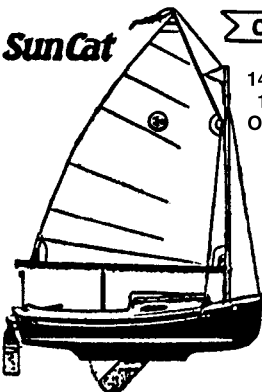
Because of the delay from the jammed pebbles, we missed the east wind and had to beat up against the north wind all morning. John and Alf passed us paddling in their 17' Tripper canoe. Later, out on the main lake, the "Elvis winds" caught us as we were trying in vain to get around Plover Point. We spent a very frustrating hour getting nowhere in a hurry. John later told us they could see us from their camp and marveled at our patience. Tacking back and forth, then again and again, with winds changing to come from a different quarter, then they would change again.

As the steady afternoon winds blew up from the south we made quick westerly progress and pulled into the protection of Wolf Bay before the gales came on, and we camped for the night. Now this camp was fraught with peril because we didn't have a camping permit for Wolf Bay. Yellowstone Park requires all backcountry camping to be in designated areas, by permit only. Our permit for that night was out at Breezy Point, five miles along, but we couldn't make it that far, what with the storms and all, and we were told that the Rangers didn't cotton to folks camping where they ought not to, so we knew we were taking a big chances stopping at Wolf Bay. Facing possible jail time or at least maybe a stern talking to, we camped there anyway. We dodged that bullet as no one else showed up at the camp to claim it and no Rangers came to cite us. Don't no one tell, OK?

The next day our watches must have stopped, the world was all out of kilter. No wind came up at all that morning from any quarter, fair or foul. After eight days we were ready to be finished with it all, so we broke down and for the first time on the trip pulled out the little electric motor and powered our way back to civilization. A light breeze final-



Yellowstone Lake, 20 miles long, 20 miles wide.



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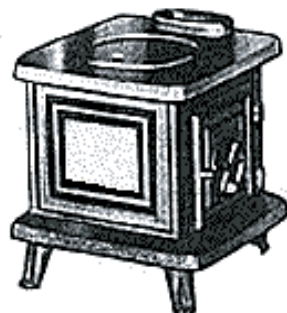
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Time has a way of mellowing one's memory and distorting facts so I cannot call this an accurate account, but I will call it a tale and take all the liberties afforded to a teller of tales. You, dear reader, can and should make of it what you will.

The year is lost in time but a long time ago I had an acquaintance who led me into many adventures. The one we will focus on is the joint ownership of a boat. The cast of characters includes myself and my partner in this effort, one "Disaster" Jones (a nickname he came by honestly which, despite his best efforts, dogged him throughout his existence) who, for simplicity, I will refer to as DJ.

In a small southern New Hampshire summer campground there was a lake and around it the usual ring of summer dwellings, some elegant, some quite spare but in one of them there was Mr Jones and his wife and two small daughters along with a dog or two. I would make an evening of going up to fish on the lake with him in a canoe. I am not at ease in a canoe, a fact which amused my friend no end.

On one of these visits he told me of a boat for sale there at the campground which could be had for short money (\$400). I took the bait and inspected it with him. It was a plywood runabout stoutly built with one of the first Johnson V4 50hp motors on its transom, sitting on a trailer. It looked like something from the pages of *Mechanics Illustrated* intended to be the queen of the lake somewhere in the Midwest where they are not all that nautically smart.

This boat was built of exterior plywood and sheathed in fiberglass on all exterior surfaces. It was about 17' long with a generous beam and freeboard and painted white with a bright red framed windshield fairly close to the bow which gave it the look of a large white hen wearing a bright, red-rimmed pair of spectacles.

The hook in this prize was the name on the side, at the stern, put on in 2" high stick-on black plastic film letters from the hardware store. It proudly called itself *Solid Waste*. When questioned about it the seller said that the previous owner worked at a sewage treatment plant and so it seemed to fit. Since we here on the edge of the ocean know it is bad luck to change a boat's name, we dared not alter it so *Solid Waste* it remained.

The deal was made and time came for the sale. When I started to write my check DJ said, "I'm a little short this week, can you cover my half 'til next week?" Not being too sharp in these matters, I reluctantly agreed and the boat was ours.

The first thing necessary was to get a valid registration on it, and since it had a

Adventures in *Solid Waste*

By Henry Szostek

Massachusetts number on its bow and a previous Massachusetts boat registration, I took the old registration card down to the registry of playthings next to North Station in Boston. At the window I held up the faded scrap of paper and asked if I could have the same number re-issued because the number was already on the boat and that would save scraping it off and re-applying it. To my surprise the clerk took the card over to a large table filled with card stubs in some system of order and promptly withdrew the exact half of the form which had been torn along the dotted line when issued. He smiled and said, "No problem," whereupon he filled out a new form with my name in the proper place and replaced the stub in the file.

As a side note: When I went there a year later to renew the registration there was a large sign over the window which read, "Due to the installation of a computerized system old numbers can no longer be re-issued." So much for modernization.

With the proper legalities all taken care of, we then proceeded to gas up, find a battery, and launch the boat at a small dirt ramp at the edge of the lake. First order of business was to see that it did not leak, and as all looked in order, the engine was fired up and pumped water. When DJ's wife and kids were aboard we put it in gear and opened the throttle, only to be greeted with a loud clanking noise from the lower unit.

With wife and kids removed we then returned the boat to the trailer and disassembled the lower unit to see that the edges of the engaging dogs on the gears were rounded and battered. This explained the bargain price. Well, DJ being a mechanic and I being a machinist, I took the offending parts home and set them up in the milling machine and re-cut the edges back to where they looked right. When re-assembled they gave no further trouble.

The next try at a ride was a success, the motor sang sweetly and we skimmed the glass smooth surface in majestic style. After a few laps of the small lake we finally decided to call it a day as the sun was setting and the bugs were getting a bit thick. We returned to the ramp where the wife and kids were removed and DJ went to get the trailer while I tended the boat.

There being no dock to tie to, I just stood there in the knee-deep water and waited for the trailer to arrive, and as I was standing there a man came up to me and began to berate me for using his ramp without paying the launching fee. I explained that I was just a guest in the area and so did not know that there was a fee. He responded with a lengthy lament of how he had made the ramp himself and expected some gratitude for it. It was just barely a ramp, in reality just a fairly smooth spot on the shore which may have taken him an afternoon to rake out, but he saw it as an engineering masterpiece and continued his lament while I stood there holding the bow off the gravel and the mosquitoes slowly drained the blood from my body. I was uncertain which was more annoying, the bugs or the ramp owner, neither showed any sign of stopping. Finally DJ arrived and satisfied the ramp owner and the boat was retrieved.

The pond test gave us enough confidence to try bigger waters but there was a hitch, the trailer hitch to be specific. It was attached to a rather rusty trailer which did not start life as a heavy duty model and with time had lost considerable metal to nature. We decided it needed some reinforcement so we towed it very carefully to DJ's dad's garage where there was a buzz box Lincoln welder and some scrap metal suitable for use. The garage featured a small swampy spot alongside which kept us well supplied with mosquitoes. After several evenings of cutting, welding, and feeding the bugs, we deemed it roadworthy.

The next voyage was on salt water in the Merrimack River. The usual supplies were gathered, gas up the boat, buy beer and a couple of sub sandwiches, buy bait and some new fishing gear, pay the ramp fee, and set out onto Joppa flats for some fishing. The gods smiled on us and we enjoyed a pleasant evening bothering the fish but not actually catching any worth keeping. This trip bolstered our confidence to the point of repeating it a few times.

The next outing featured us launching and going across the river to the Amesbury side to buy bait. When we returned to the boat and set out from the dock toward the flats there was something wrong. The boat felt slower than it had been, a quick check revealed considerable water at the stern and a light went on in both our minds simultaneously, **THE DRAIN PLUG!!** We had forgotten to put it in. "Open the throttle and keep it open," I said as we made our way downriver. Eventually the water drained out while we were on plane and the plug was found and inserted.

We headed out to a shallow area on the north side of the river and proceeded to anchor. We put down lines and broke out the sandwiches and beer and sat back basking in the late afternoon sun. About halfway through the sandwich we noticed a Coast Guard boat seeming to make an effort to gain our attention. The CG boat drew more than we did so they did not come to us but asked that we come to them. We upped anchor and motored over to them and they said that they were looking for two men in a red and white boat that was in trouble, and asked if we were those two.

"No, it's not us, must be someone else." With that they went away and we returned to the shallows.

On the return to the ramp the motor did not sing so sweetly, it was running rough and skipping but still running. Later investigation revealed a burned hole in the coil of the magnet. The ownership of an elderly motor is a passport to meeting many new people like the owners of outboard dealerships. We cultivated many in the search for used parts and one produced a replacement coil for the right price. The motor displayed its gratitude by again singing sweetly.

As the season progressed we tried larger waters on the edge of the Atlantic between Gloucester and Marblehead. This revealed some shortcomings in the design of this boat. For one thing, the wheel was far enough forward and the windshield short enough to allow the spray in rougher seas to thoroughly soak the occupants. And the cockpit sole was a bit soft and yielding in some places. We decided that a remodeling was in order. So it was back to dad's garage and the deconstruction began.

To be continued...

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I recently mentioned the Intracoastal Waterway to a non-sailing friend. He had never heard of it and was astonished to hear that a boat could travel from Massachusetts to Florida, and even to Texas, hardly ever going to sea. East Coast boaters know it well, of course, and thousands of them follow the ICW south in the fall and north in the spring. First-timers are full of wonder, old hands are nonchalant, but I suspect few of them think much about how this marvelous amenity came about.

It all started in 1623. The early settlers of Cape Ann, north of Boston, realized that by connecting the Annisquam River to Gloucester Harbor with a 300' ditch they could save a 15-mile trip around the Cape. The Blynman Canal, as it is now called, is still in daily use and constitutes the oldest and most northerly section of the Intracoastal Waterway.

In the late 1700s the English industrial revolution spawned a network of canals all over Great Britain. The newly independent United States saw the commercial success of England's canals and followed their example. In 1793 a private company was formed to connect Norfolk, Virginia, and Albemarle Sound in North Carolina with a 22-mile canal through the Great Dismal Swamp. This project languished for lack of funds, however, and was still far from complete in 1808 when the Intracoastal Waterway got its real start.

The "Father" of the ICW, Albert Gallatin, was born in Geneva in 1761 and emigrated to America when he was 19. He worked at various enterprises, eventually becoming a farmer in western Pennsylvania. He became involved in politics and served three terms in the United States House of Representatives. Thomas Jefferson, recognizing his energy and talent, appointed him Treasury Secretary in 1801 and he remained in that position for 13 years, right through James Madison's administration.

Not content with confining himself to fiscal matters, he submitted to Congress in 1808 a monumental report recommending a vast network of national roads and canals. The keystone of the plan was four coastal canals, allowing inland passage all the way from Massachusetts to North Carolina. The four were to become the Cape Cod Canal, the Delaware and Raritan Canal across New Jersey, the Chesapeake and Delaware Canal, and the already begun Dismal Swamp Canal. Several much smaller proposed cuts extended the system to Georgia.

Gallatin estimated ten years for construction at a cost of \$3 million. His overall plan, including many other roads and canals, came to \$20 million, a huge sum at the time (the enormous Louisiana Purchase five years earlier had cost \$15 million). Although the United States then had a surplus of \$5 million, Congress balked and it was more than a century before Gallatin's incredibly farseeing plan became a reality.

Four years after Gallatin's report, war broke out with Great Britain. Despite the successes of our handful of big frigates, the Royal Navy ranged freely along our coasts, capturing hundreds of valuable ships and cargoes. The importance of a coastwise canal system during war was clearly demonstrated and remained important right up to World War II. In 1819 John C. Calhoun, the Secretary of War, submitted another plan to Congress for a system of roads and canals very similar to Gallatin's, but with an emphasis on national defense, utilizing the Army Corps of Engineers. Again, despite the lessons of the recent war, Congress procrastinated.

Gallatin's Dream

By Monty Morris

Finally, in 1824 Congress passed the General Survey Act authorizing use of the Corps of Engineers for design and construction of roads and canals of national importance. Still there was no comprehensive plan. The following year the most famous of American canals was completed by New York State. The Erie Canal was tremendously successful and sparked dozens of other canal schemes. In 1826 Congress authorized 20 river and harbor projects along the eastern seaboard, including assistance to the still incomplete Dismal Swamp Canal. At last, in 1828, it was opened for business, the first link in Gallatin's grand plan.

Meanwhile, two of the remaining three links were underway as private projects. The Chesapeake and Delaware Canal, cutting 13 miles across the Delmarva Peninsula, was actually begun in 1804 but the effort failed within a year. In 1823 it was begun again with federal assistance, finally opening in 1829. Then, as now, it cut 300 miles off the trip from Philadelphia to Baltimore.

In the 1830s several canals were built across New Jersey, primarily for the transport of Pennsylvania anthracite coal to burgeoning New York City. The Delaware and Hudson Canal was too far north to be of use to coastwise traffic. The Morris Canal, crossing mountainous terrain, used 23 locks and 23 steam-powered inclined planes to haul cargoes from the Delaware to the Hudson, but the size of the barges was severely limited. The 44-mile Delaware and Raritan Canal was to follow a much easier route from Trenton to New Brunswick. (*A story of an 1887 cruise on this canal, "Snubbin' Thru Jersey," appeared in our March/April/May 2008 issues.—Ed.*)

By 1830 railroads were already beginning to compete with canals. In that year New Jersey decided to hedge its bets and authorized companies to construct both across the state. The canal was opened in 1838, the third of Gallatin's quartet, and was immediately successful. The railroad running parallel to it was eventually to doom it, however, and this became the fate of many canals built at that time.

Three of Gallatin's canals had been completed within a decade but the fourth was to wait another 76 years. The Cape Cod Canal had been envisioned as early as 1676 when the Massachusetts General Court appointed a survey committee. Eight more surveys were carried out during the 1700s and 1800s with no results. Finally, in 1909 August Belmont, a New York financier, formed a syndicate and began construction. The last link in Gallatin's dream was at last completed in 1914 to great acclaim.

The world, meanwhile, had changed. Most of the canals built in the early 19th century had been put out of business by the huge and efficient railroad system that crisscrossed the country. The only reason the Cape Cod Canal was built so late was that it was conceived as a canal for ships rather than barges. Although relatively narrow and shallow when they opened, both the Chesapeake and Delaware Canal and the Cape Cod Canal were eventually taken over by the Corps

of Engineers, which gradually widened and deepened them so that they now accommodate oceangoing vessels.

The Dismal Swamp Canal, the oldest of the four, remains open today. A charming relic of our nation's youth, it carries mostly pleasure craft. The parallel Albemarle and Chesapeake Canal, which opened in 1859, carries far more barge traffic. Eventually the southern canal system was extended all the way to Miami, through Florida, and around the Gulf of Mexico to Texas.

Gallatin's dream, so long in completion, was to last only 19 years, however. In 1933 the Delaware and Raritan Canal at last succumbed to railroad competition and ceased operating, long after most of its contemporaries had disappeared. In 1942, with German submarines sinking dozens of American vessels within sight of our coasts, the idea of reopening the Canal and even of building a ship canal across New Jersey was briefly considered, but the crisis passed and so did the plans. Today central New Jersey is so industrially and residentially dense that such a canal will never reappear.

There is an alternative, however. Between 1908 and 1918 New Jersey completed a shallow waterway with low fixed bridges over Manasquan, only 26 miles south of Sandy Hook (the entrance to New York Harbor), down the coast all the way to Cape May. In 1942 the Corps of Engineers dredged the Cape May Canal, connecting the southern end of the New Jersey Canal to Delaware Bay. In 1945 the Corps of Engineers took over the New Jersey Canal and was authorized by Congress to improve it to 100' width and 12' depth. This project was put on hold for lack of funds and has never been revived.

Generations of sailors struggling along the often stormy New Jersey coast have cursed the lack of a protected alternative between New York and Cape May. More than a half century later it is the only section of the 1,000-mile East Coast ICW that cannot accommodate masted vessels with 6' draft. Currently the Corps of Engineers does not even have the funds to dredge critical areas of the ICW in southern states. It is unlikely that they will ever improve the New Jersey Canal. Albert Gallatin would be disappointed.



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(John Depa's recent series on his cruise to the Bahamas in his 19' West Wight Potter 19 stimulated my memories of our trip 30 years ago.)

One winter afternoon in 1978 my friend Vince and I set out from Ft Lauderdale in my small but able 21' sloop, the *Chamade*, bound for West End, Grand Bahama. She was a French-built pocket cruiser, one of a class the prototype for which had been the smallest entry in one of the early OSTAR races.

Solid and somewhat under-canvased, she had never been much of a performer in New England where I kept her for the first few years. But now, headed for the Bahamas where the winter winds tend to be constant and strong, she would come into her own.

A couple of hours after our departure from Lauderdale we got into the Gulf Stream where the modest seas we had enjoyed coming out remained modest but now rode on top of an easy but quite monumental swell running along underneath. It felt as though we had mounted a giant seesaw or Ferris wheel as we climbed and climbed and then dropped down and down to a majestic rhythm.

The extent of this was emphasized when we met a small tanker headed north. Passing quite close, it seemed as if we could look down her funnel when on top of a big swell and then we could look up at large expanses of her bottom paint when she rose to a crest and we fell to the bottom of a trough. It was all very easy and unhurried as we broad reached along in a nice 15kt breeze, but there was a great deal of movement in a ponderous, inexorable kind of way.

About this time I noticed Vince was not looking well. There was a distinctly greenish cast to his features and the Italian grinder he had been eating before we encountered the big swells now rolled back and forth on the deck unheeded. "I think there was something wrong with the sandwich," he said in a small voice and emitted a strange, plaintive groan. Shortly thereafter Vince went below and I could see through the companionway that he had eschewed the bunks and was lying on the cabin sole. The groan was followed by others which in time became more like screams.

By now we were well out in the Stream with both the wind and the strong current rushing us away from Lauderdale and on toward our intended destination. In my tough but not very weatherly sloop with no power but a cranky four-horse outboard intended only for docking maneuvers, it was not clear that we could get back to Lauderdale even if

Fort Lauderdale to West End Grand Bahama in a 21' Sloop

By W. R. Cheney

we wanted to. If Vince was in real trouble, which is certainly what it sounded like, I had to ask myself what I could realistically do about it.

My hope was that Vince's problem had more to do with our boat's motion and our top to bottom inspection of the tanker than anything to do with the grinder. The fact that I had eaten its twin sister (same bread, same salami, same mayo, etc) with no ill effects supported this view. It seemed better to go on toward a destination we had meticulously planned for and had every expectation of being able to reach than to turn around and try to get back to Lauderdale with very uncertain prospects. The Gulf Stream is a vast and powerful machine and small craft are best advised to use it rather than fight it.

I hoped I was doing the right thing as I held to our planned course. Calling for help was not an option. The *Chamade* carried no transmitter, and in that more primitive time no navigational instruments beyond a compass, a Walker patent log, and a portable radio.

The wind held strong and we forged along all night under a brilliant starlit sky. To the west the Florida coast gave off an unearthly glow all along its length from north to south. Even then, in those less ecologically conscious days, I remember wondering at the vast amount of energy that was being used and so arguably wasted. Thinking that for every one of those millions and millions of lights there was probably an air conditioner too... Seen from miles away at sea, Florida was incandescent, humming away, and glowing, looming on the horizon like some infernal region.

Our planning had been as careful as we could make it and our course had been plotted to allow for the considerable drift to the north which could be expected when sailing across currents running from 1-4.5 knots. Since we would only be going ahead at 4-5 knots tops, and probably averaging much less, it can be seen that our sideways travel would be an important part of our progress.

All of our calculations proved in vain, however, when early morning light revealed a structure which could only be the Great Isaac Light, way, way south of our intended landfall. Either the Stream had not been doing its usual thing or we had overcompensated by an almost unbelievable degree. Or, and here was a nagging fear that would haunt us for the rest of our crossing, the compass was way off.

I adjusted our course northward and we sailed on. The weather was fair and the breezes were light until they quit altogether around midmorning. Fortunately Vince seemed to be somewhat better although he could not, or would not, move from the cabin sole. He took some water down there and stopped moaning. For the first time I was pretty sure he would survive.

We drifted on a glassy sea until 8-9pm when a nice reaching breeze kicked up and we began our second night at sea. Sometime after

midnight we picked up a red light on the horizon ahead, which we believed to be a radio tower on Grand Bahama, and we sailed more or less confidently toward that until dawn.

It was another wonderful starlit and moonlit night and rushing along in a full sail breeze was as fine as anything I could imagine. The starry sky above was spectacular and it was matched by the broad trail of sparkling bioluminescence the boat was leaving in her wake. But after two days and nights without sleep I was becoming dangerously fatigued and light-headed. Worries about Vince's condition and uncertainty about our position kept the mood from becoming exactly euphoric.

With the onset of daylight our red beacon disappeared, which was to be expected, but more surprising and disconcerting was the fact that no land appeared beneath the place where it had been. After sailing toward what we believed to be a land-based light for many long hours, we could not understand this. Now we began to doubt all our previous assumptions and to wonder if we had any idea where we were at all. We had been way off on the first leg of our journey and there seemed to be no reason to believe we weren't off on this one, also.

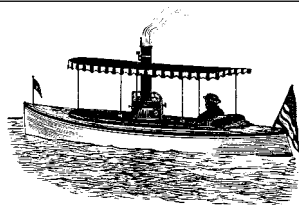
Matters were not improved when, in my sleep-deprived state, I saw an oil derrick off to the east only to have it dissolve into thin air moments later. Remembered advice from a bystander on a dock back in Lauderdale to the effect that, "If you get lost, steer west and look for a large continent" was, for some reason, neither amusing nor reassuring.

Fortunately Vince began to revive more completely now and, after consuming several cups of coffee, he began to tinker with the portable radio. He got an FM station located on Grand Bahama and by rotating the set with its directional antenna we soon had a position line. West End was either in one direction, or it was in another, exactly 180° opposed. We were so rattled at this point that we weren't at all sure which to try. One of these directions did seem more likely than the other, but only if we had not already sailed past the island. We couldn't be sure of anything.

Gathering up our courage, we began sailing down our radio beam in the more likely direction and before long a very low lying land appeared to starboard. Never having been to the Bahamas before, we hadn't realized how low the land was and how close we had to get before we could see it.

Staying well clear of the extensive shoals making out from shore, we followed the contour of the island around to the inlet between Indian Cay and West End proper. All fatigue disappeared and as we surged along we watched shoals of smaller fish leap frantically into the air as larger, dark shapes cruised just below the surface, slashing and darting in the incredibly blue water. A very real drama of life and death was playing out before our eyes and, as we watched, we were glad our own small drama was ending so harmlessly.

The next day standing on a dock in the West End Marina and looking out toward the inlet, I could see large seas breaking right across it. A powerful norther had arrived overnight and conditions in the inlet were such that no craft could live there. The open water outside did not look much better as the roaring wind clashed with the powerful current, creating chaotic seas. I wondered what we would have done if, sleep deprived and overwrought, we had arrived to find those conditions. Thirty some years later, I still wonder.



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L.S. Baldwin Box 884 Killingworth, CT 06419

Three local Cortez, Florida, men have been exploring Florida waters using kayaks. Through their explorations they had worked out a system. Basically they trucked their camping gear to a spot on a river on which they wanted to travel. They left a vehicle there and took another vehicle upriver to a launching site and started off on their kayaks. They traveled the river to the camping spot. The process could be repeated as many times as necessary and over as long a distance as they wanted to travel. It worked out well but they decided that if they had a larger, single boat it might even be a better way to travel and explore.

Randy Fowler, David Persson, and Bill Pomeroy had heard of the Florida Maritime Museum at Cortez and its boat building program, so they investigated it. Bob Pitt, the boat builder at the Museum, worked with them by taking a design of a 12' skiff by an early Fogartyville boat builder, Bat Fogarty, stretching it to 18', retaining a 48" beam, and giving it two rowing stations and a length long enough to carry along the camping equipment. It looked good. The three friends decided to go for it.

Then someone thought about rowing the longer distances that they might undertake with this boat and wondered whether a sail could be added. Bob could work that in, too. He planned the boat to satisfy both needs by adding a mast, a centerboard, and retaining the two rowing stations. Bob also drew on his own 30 years of Florida boat building experience and on an intimate knowledge of both Florida history and Florida maritime history to build the boat. All boats built by Museum volunteers celebrate a Florida heritage.

This boat, built with a length to hold equipment, a narrow beam to navigate rivers, and a shallow draft both for rivers and coastal waters, with its sail cut to have a compatible center of effort, fits the owners' needs perfectly. When the wind dies or the river slows, two men can work the oars while the other can handle the tiller.

Building the *Elizabeth Ring* At the Florida Maritime Museum

By Doug Calhoun



The varnished Spanish cedar foredeck gives off a pleasing rosy glow that counterpoints the white painted hull.

The boat's materials celebrate this Florida heritage as well. The transom is native heart pine, the native cypress lapstraked hull is made of two planks, about 10" at the stem and down to 7" or so at the transom. The bottom is cross-planked also with cypress. The decks are made of Spanish cedar. The deck at the bow is made of strips 1½" wide, ¾" thick, which are alternated with black caulking. The decks have an attractive reddish glow when varnished that counterpoints the white painted hull. Many volunteers worked on the boat, different people with different skills fashioning together different parts at different times, all brought together under the single vision of Bob Pitt.

The boat looked so good when finished that the new owners agreed to take her to the Chesapeake Bay Maritime Museum's 27th Annual Mid-Atlantic Small Craft Festival at St Michaels, Maryland, earlier this October and enter her in the wooden boat competition. Randy Fowler and his wife, Melanni, trailered the boat up to St Michaels. Bob Pitt, Roger Allen, the Director of the Museum, and a few Boat Shop volunteers went along.

The boat, now named the *Elizabeth Ring* for the Fowlers' daughter, entered into the competition with about 150 other wooden boats from up and down the East Coast. Small boats of various kinds; kayaks, sailboats, and boats with engines entered into the competition. The winner chosen over all boats entered into any category (more than 150 boats) received the prize called The People's Choice. Of course, it was the *Elizabeth Ring*. This is the third time the Florida Maritime Museum has won the People's Choice, and the second time in a row. Last year's winner was the restored Cuban refugee boat, *Esperanza*.

Randy had such a good time that, since he is now retired from gainful employment, he volunteers at the Museum's Boat Building Shop. Hey! More boat time, one way or another.

(The Florida Maritime Museum at Cortez, a cooperative historical project between the Florida Institute for Salt Water Heritage and Manatee County Clerk of the Circuit Court, R.B. "Chips" Shore's Historical Resources Department, is located at 4415 119th St West, Cortez, Florida, and is open Tuesday through Saturday 8:30am-4pm.

The Museum's Boat Shop is at 4523 123rd St Ct W, Cortez, Florida, 34215. Volunteers are at work Thursdays, Fridays, and Saturdays 9am-3pm.

Both welcome volunteers of various skill levels, donations, and other meaningful contributions.)

Bob Pitt showing Randy Fowler how to rig the sail with volunteer Jim Kelly on the left.



Launching at St Michaels with (from left to right) Bob Pitt, Jerry Bien, and Randy Fowler.



When it was first suggested that I build a 9'x4' dory, I replied, "Maybe," thinking I'm too old at 86. However, Carl Allen's son, Carl C., encouraged me to consider the idea. "My Pappa gave the plans for one to the H.E. White Maritime Museum and Oswego Maritime Foundation for a Family Boat Building program that they wished to sponsor in 2006. Besides that, I bought a kit then and it is just waiting to be assembled." I changed my mind, knowing I would be in good hands with Carl (also 86), his daughters Jenny, Carol, and son.



Carl demonstrates the use of the hammer.

Carl C. and I view the array of clamps.



The Novice at Family Boat Building

By Pearl N. Rook

August 21: Carl and Jenny glue the blades to the oars. For Steps 6-12 (there are 24 in all), the transom, bowsprit, and garboard are attached to the bottom. Carl C. begins nailing the ribs while I hesitate, wondering about fumbling fingers. Hmmm, perhaps I should make friends with the hammer. Doing so, it connected more frequently with the nail heads. After finishing that phase, we sanded the hull.

August 22: Carol, Carl C., and I caulk, don gloves to apply the fiberglass, not easy because it slips and slithers out of place when the epoxy is brushed on it. Next, the gunwales are glued, nailed, and clamped with a variety of innovative clamps. After lunch the bow and stern seats are secured.

August 23: Sounding like a bevy of bees swarming, all surfaces are sanded and checked out by the instructors, Dan Tryon, Rich Bush, and Mike Wichowski. The oars are then fitted with hardware. The time has come to prime paint the dory. Within a few minutes it is ready to leave.

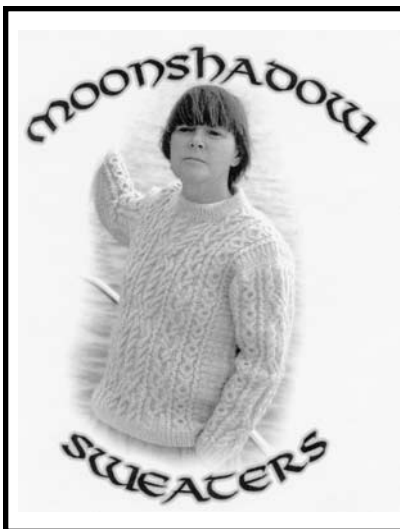
Thanks to Carol Allen Serrett, the dory begins its journey to my home port aboard her truck; on the final leg it rode, like a bowsprit aboard my Boston Whaler across Sodus Bay, New York, to the Barrier Bar. During the remaining days of August and the first part of September she is painted. The weather did not cooperate to launch the craft so she is dry docked until spring. I will try to wait patiently for that happy day.

Working with the Allen family in this creative program has been and will continue to be a special memory to cherish.



While I get friendly with the hammer, Carl watches out for his fingers.

Mike Wichowski, Dan Tryon, and Carol Allen Serrett load my dory into Carol's truck.



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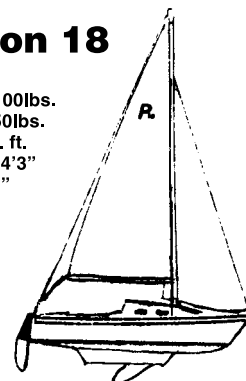
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FERNALD'S MARINE

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Back in 1959 while driving on Route 53 in Lisle, Illinois (near Chicago), I spotted a white wooden boat hull for sale in a front yard. It rested on a makeshift boat trailer. I checked it out and found it was missing its original Studebaker inline four or six-cylinder inboard engine. The seller told me it was a "Planer Speed Boat." There was no manufacturer's ID plate or any other identifying marks.

It had a blunt laminated bow, measured 18' long by 7' wide, a 1/2" marine plywood skin with two 2"x6" hardwood rails running stern to bow mounted inside on the plywood keel on which the engine had been mounted. There was a hole in the aft keel where the driveshaft once spun and another hole in the stern bulkhead for the exhaust pipe. It probably weighed in around 200-300lbs and needed complete refurbishing inside and out. There was no windshield but there was an instrument panel and a cutout where a steering wheel was mounted. Without a manufacturers' ID plate it may have been a well-built homemade boat.

My buddy Jim and I bought it and hauled it to my dad's backyard. We drafted five men to remove it from the trailer and flip it over to allow us to work on the hull. We sanded the old faded paint off and applied a complete Montgomery Ward's new on the market Fiberglass Kit. The glassing was done in the garage with the doors open. It was a new learning experience but went well. We plugged the driveshaft hole somehow and then just glassed over the plug.

We had decided to use an ex-military 50hp Evinrude outboard motor that we picked up as a bargain for power. We plugged that exhaust port on the stern and adapted a steel discarded transformer bracket given to us by the best lineman I knew, my dad! The motor would be mounted on that strong bracket. The new fiberglass finish was white with dark blue trim on the sides with an all blue deck. Drafting five men again, we flipped over the boat and finished glassing the forward and side decks.

Big plexiglass windshields were beyond our pocketbook so we picked up a '58 surplus automobile wrap-around windshield. It fit the width of the cockpit perfectly and was mounted in a soft rubber "U" cushion to absorb vibration and shocks. Once we had finished we borrowed those very handy men again and mounted that gleaming beauty on its trailer and then lugged that 80lb outboard out and mounted it onto the steel bracket on the stern. That motor had a manual rope start on the exposed flywheel, no neutral gear, and an integral fuel tank mounted around the exposed flywheel. It was an opposed four-cylinder water-cooled. We attached a tiller for temporarily steering.

We hauled it to the Plank Road boat launch on the Des Plaines River for testing. After slipping it off of the trailer and into the water we carefully checked for leaks while holding our breath and with fingers crossed. Hurray! No leaks. We patted ourselves on our backs. I believe the engine was a two-cycle. After mixing the right ratio of oil to fuel we poured the fuel into the fuel tank. I choked the carburetor and pulled on the rope starter. Luckily the bow was pointed straight up the river. That engine started with a roar and in an instant we had our first "No Name" speedboat! Yes. That engine matched the boat.

After testing it for turning radius at different speeds, we went to wide open throttle. We were thrilled when she, after plow-

The McAuley African Queen

By Bob McAuley



Our *African Queen* at its final anchorage. The author stands beside her with four-year-old son Mike aboard.

ing along at slow speed, suddenly dropped the bow and the bow wave disappeared as the stern rose up, sending the hull parallel to the flat river water. Our "Planer Speedboat" was playing! We figured the speed at 25mph.

That summer brought many changes. That bear of a motor gave us fits when docking with no neutral gear. Judging river current and wind was tricky when aiming for the boat trailer during take-out time. Once the motor was shut down on the water, gliding and quick paddling would then bring us to the boat trailer, even then much grunting was necessary to secure the boat to the trailer for haul-out as we had no trailer winch.

Then my buddy Jim fell in love and wanted out of the boat and into a marriage. I bought him out and my brother Larry bought in. The first thing our new team did was to trade in that monster motor for a brand new 45hp Mercury four-cylinder with a gearbox consisting of forward/neutral/reverse. What a welcome change. It was about 20lbs lighter than the bear it replaced.

We longed to cruise the Mississippi River and made plans to haul our "No Name" boat out there. Savanna, Illinois, is on the Mississippi River and that's where we went. We planned to keep it at the local marina in town, but the operator didn't like our boat and wouldn't let us dock it there. Having been snubbed, we explored on the edge of town and found the lovely Plum River which feeds into the Mississippi just south of the railroad bridge. An access road paralleled the little river and upon driving down it, we found a quaint home lived in by Otto. What a jewel of a find!

Otto was about 86 years young, wiry, short, tough as nails, and an expert on dock building! He was the overseer of at least a dozen local boats tied up at his Plum River boat marina. We asked him if we could moor our boat at his marina. He said yes, but he would have to help us build our own dock. When asked about boat rent he charged us a "six-pack" per month! Otto was our boat savior. He kept an eye on all his boats during and after rains to prevent sinkings.

He suggested to us that we build an awning or cover for our boat to shed water when we were away. We only came out on week-ends. Following his advice, we built an adjustable corrugated rigid fiberglass cover attached to the boat that could be lowered and raised. Out on the water it was a sunshade. When moored, with it lowered, it would keep the rain out. At last, it was finally great to own a very stable and seaworthy boat. It was so nice to be able to stand or walk on the side

decks all around the open cockpit without the worry of the boat tipping over.

We tested its stability against the wind one warm sunny afternoon into a windstorm on the Mississippi. The wind created 4'-6' swells with breaking whitecaps all around. It just rode up one swell and down the next with an occasional whitecap breaking over the bow. Sometimes the heavy bow would come out of the water and slap the water on its return. It was a roller coaster ride and quite impressive.

Those were the carefree years when we went boat camping, fishing, and even water skiing on the big river below the Mississippi Palisades Park. I even got my wife JoAnne out on the river and she steered just fine. When out on the river with the cover up it resembled that boat that Humphrey Bogart and Katherine Hepburn manually towed through a jungle river in Africa. And so we finally named it *The African Queen*.

In the fall and the spring we would trailer the boat from the Palisades boat ramp and out to the Savanna Airport where we kept it in a hangar during the winter. It was always a chore taking out the boat because of the poor ramp and poorer makeshift trailer. Eventually we mounted running lights and a new steering wheel next to the throttle behind the windshield. We even treated it to a new paint job. At the airport we painted over the blue and white colors with fresh fiberglass paint. It really stood out with bright green with gold slash wave designs.

One memorable boat camping trip had us anchored up river by an island next to some backwaters. About 3am a powerful thunderstorm came galloping across the river from Iowa and clobbered us with hailstones. It sounded like gunfire bouncing off the fiberglass roof. The lightning put on quite a show along with the thunderclaps. The waves were quite impressive out on the main river and we were quite content to be tucked behind that island totally soaked but happy!

Then one spring we got a sad surprise when we drove down the Plum River road and stopped at Otto's home. He was gone. We talked to some other local boat owners there and they said that Otto was off to Iowa in an old peoples home. He died shortly after. Now there was no one to watch our boat if we brought it back up the Plum for summer mooring.

We decided to trailer it to a new mooring out in the backwaters at a boat ramp called Riverview near the airport. This would be temporary until something better came along. We launched and staked it near other staked boats in this sheltered backwater. We padlocked it to a stout chain and covered the motor. When we returned a week later the motor was gone. Quite discouraged, we brought the trailer back from the airport and in hauling out our *African Queen*, we severely damaged the transom.

Back at the airport came more bad news. There was no longer any hangar space available for storage. That weakened trailer would not make another long road trip back to Chicago. The airport manager gave the OK to park it next to the hangars and that is what we did. Because of job constraints and a new family commitments we couldn't/wouldn't spend any more time repairing it. We returned the following weekend and stripped it of its accessories, some of which I still have today. It was a sad day when we drove away from the airport. Six months later we checked back and found that the new caretaker had burned it.

The description of this little boat came from a book published in 1937 by *Popular Science* magazine; it is probably a reprint of an article that appeared some time in the mid-1930s. Although unattributed, the quality of the design, the publisher, and the style of writing makes it certain that it was by the great ship modeler E. Armitage McCann.

Radio control could be easily incorporated, and the egg cart wood could be replaced with $\frac{1}{16}$ " aircraft plywood which, with modern adhesives, would make a strong model suitable for children of any age. In the interest of historical accuracy we have left the text as written, including the rather hair-raising (by today's standards) instructions for cooking your own glue and casting a keel. The latter could be easily made from strap iron fiberglassed in place.

A Speedy Racing Schooner

When building miniature boats, some of us prefer sailing rather than shelf models. A special fascination attaches itself to sailing models that are planked or built up instead of being dug out or made on the "bread and butter" plan. The construction has been so simplified that ten or twelve-year-old boys can undertake the model, which is designed to develop skill to the point where it is possible to produce complicated operating models of modern steamers, yachts, or sailboats, true in form and line, pleasing to the eye, and efficient in the water. Very few tools are required.

The little schooner illustrated is an excellent beginner's model. It is not a copy of any existing boat, nor is it intended as such. The rig is similar to certain river schooners of years ago. After you have built this boat, you may, by using certain modifications of the lines and a few added tricks of construction, improve your craftsmanship to the point where it is possible to build any hull desired.

In spite of her very elementary characteristics, this schooner is a stiff, fast sailer. The simplified rig makes for speed in sail adjustments. In races with boats under 30" she will place frequently if handled reasonably well.

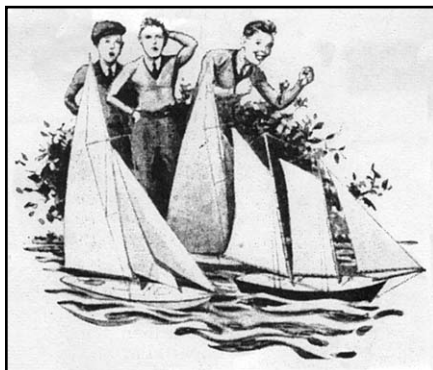
All of the material can be bought for about a dollar, or less if you find some egg boxes with thin sides that can be used. The best wood, though, is soft white pine. This boat is built with glue. About the best kind to use is celluloid cement, and if you use much of it, it will pay to make your own. Place about $\frac{1}{2}$ lb of old celluloid side curtain lights from old cars, photographic films from which the emulsion has been removed, or even old celluloid toys and toothbrush handles into a quart bottle with a wide mouth and fill the bottle with acetone. It is allowed to remain an hour, then stirred vigorously for about five minutes and corked tightly. The next day it is stirred until evenly mixed. It should have the consistency of thick cream. If you use this type of cement, do not place it close to a flame or it will burn. It will dry very slowly if some white shellac is added.

For tools you need a coping saw or jig saw, a small plane, a very stout razor blade knife, a sharp pocketknife, a fine-tooth hand saw or cabinetmaker's miter saw, a pin drill and drills No 50, 55, 60, and 65, a light hammer of about 2oz, sandpaper, a screwdriver, and a few $\frac{1}{2}$ " No 4 roundhead wood screws and washers. A jeweler's saw frame and blades are useful, as are round-nose pliers and a hand drill.

A Speedy Racing Schooner

Editor's Note

(Reprinted from *The Model Yacht Newsletter* of the US Vintage Model Yacht Group)



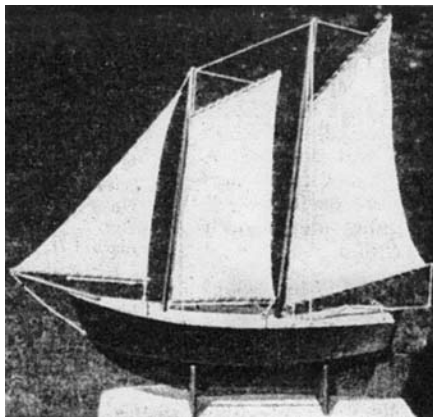
On one $\frac{1}{4}$ " board (see list of materials) lay out a sidepiece. Tack this board to another and saw out both at once. Separate them and mark vertical lines 2" apart on both, beginning at the stern. These are the station lines for the lower ribs and deck beams. Plane the $\frac{1}{4}$ "x $\frac{3}{8}$ "x10" piece to a triangular shape of the dimensions shown for the stem piece. Cut it into two 5" pieces.

Drive two 8-penny nails into a board on the bench until rigid, have them about 4" apart. Lay one of the 5" pieces with the back or $\frac{1}{2}$ " side against the two nails. Apply glue to the front end of one of the sides and nail it to the stem piece with $\frac{1}{2}$ " No 20 brass escutcheon pins, as shown. Next lay this side flat in the jig, and nail and glue on the other side board. See that the stem is vertical. Now set this aside to dry while cutting out the lower ribs as shown. Cut a notch in each $\frac{1}{4}$ " square for the keel. Cut out the stern board, too, but do not notch it.

The keel is now cut from the $\frac{1}{2}$ " board. Plane the front edge to a point. Saw off the part which is to be replaced later with lead. This piece may be used as a pattern to mold the lead.

After an hour and a half, if you have used celluloid cement, you are ready to proceed. Hold the stern board in a vise, put glue on one edge of it, and nail one sidepiece to it. Turn it over in the vise and glue and nail the other side. Use plenty of cement.

Spring the sides apart and slip the lower ribs into place at their proper stations. Set the ribs in so that the bevel begins at the edge of



the side. Drive an escutcheon pin into each rib from each side. Make the inside keel from $\frac{1}{4}$ " square wood. Fit it inside the inside stem in the notches of the lower ribs, and spring it over to, and inside of, the stern, as shown. Hold in place with glue and pins.

Turn the frame over and put in the deck beams. They are cut according to the lengths given on the plan from $\frac{1}{4}$ " square stock. Mark a center line on each. Force each beam into place and hold with glue and a pin at each end. When completed, smooth the top of the inside stem flush with the sides.

Take one of the 2" pieces of $\frac{1}{8}$ " stock, mark a center line on it, and screw to the deck beams with screws with washers under them so that the center line of the boat, as indicated on the deck beams, and the center line on the deck board coincide. Use only enough screws to hold the hull straight. Do not glue.

Place the hull on the bench bottom up. Smooth off the inside stem flush with the end of the keel. Spring a $\frac{1}{8}$ " board to one side of the bottom to get the feel of the bend. You will notice that it curves at the keel and will have to be cut on a curve. Mark around the outside of the hull while the board is held in place. Trim this board until about $\frac{1}{4}$ " wider than the line shows. Put plenty of glue on the ribs, edges of the sides, and at the keel. Hold the board at the stern with $\frac{1}{2}$ " screws with washers under them and at the ribs with pins driven through. At the bow, screws will be needed. When in place, trim the bottom board along the center of the keel. Fit on the other side of the bottom as before, trimming the two sides together at the keel. This task requires more care than any other in building the boat.

Paint the inside of the boat at the corners, ribs, and keel liberally with the cement. Now make mast steps and insert them in their proper places. Square off the front end of the boat and glue on the other 5" of the stem piece. Hold in place with a pin or two while the glue is drying. The masts are made from $\frac{1}{2}$ " square stock, planed to a square taper of $\frac{1}{4}$ " at the top and $\frac{1}{16}$ " at the bottom. Plane off the corners until eight-sided. Next, plane off these corners, one shaving at a time, while rotating the mast, and continue until it is practically round. The masts should taper from $\frac{1}{16}$ " to $\frac{3}{16}$ ". The mainmast is about 26" long, and the foremast about 22". Make the spars similarly. The main boom and fore boom taper from about $\frac{5}{16}$ " to $\frac{1}{8}$ ", and jib boom and gaffs are slightly smaller. Finish these with coarse sandpaper and smooth with fine. They are given three coats of spar varnish, polished with steel wool between coats. Finally rub them with steel wool and polish with a good floor wax. The bowsprit is $6\frac{1}{2}$ " long, tapering from $\frac{3}{8}$ " to $\frac{1}{4}$ ". The part that is to lie on the deck is planed flat on that side.

By the time the spars are made, the glue on the hull should be dry. Remove all pins and screws. Whittle pegs, dip in glue, drive them in the screw holes, and break them off. Sandpaper the bottom smooth, including the bottom of the outside stem piece. Fit the keel. Remove the center deck board and drill holes through the inside keel for screws. Fasten the outside keel in place with glue and screws from the inside. Replace the center deck board with glue. Mark and cut the mast holes, fitting the masts in place. Cut off the tops so that the foremast is exactly 18" above the deck, and the mainmast 22". Take out the masts and glue on the rest of the deck with plenty of cement. Hold temporarily with pins. With a sharp knife trim off

Put on the gaffs. Screw eyes are inserted in the tops of the masts. Wrap the tops with thread and apply glue. Put the screw eyes in the booms as shown, and two screw eyes in the deck on each side of each mast, the first $\frac{1}{2}$ " back of the mast at the deck and the second 2" back of the mast. At the bow, about $\frac{1}{2}$ " above the keel, insert another last screw eye. Rig the ship with No 3 cord from the bow screw eye, up over the end of the bowsprit to the top of the foremast and across to the mainmast. Make sure the masts are still as far apart at the top as at the deck. Tie in the side stays on the foremast first, then on the main.

Cut the sails from light cloth. To avoid trouble here, proceed as follows: A piece of wrapping paper is cut $\frac{1}{8}$ " oversize one way. The cloth is cut to this pattern $\frac{1}{4}$ " oversize all around. Use the selvage edge at the leech (after edge). The pattern is then sewed to the cloth, except the selvage side. The overlapping edge is folded over the paper and the sail goes through the sewing machine again. Make one more fold, this time turning over the edge of the paper, and run the sail through the machine twice around three sides. Tear away the paper and a sail with a neatly hemmed edge on three sides is left. This prevents any distortion of shape by hemming.

The sails are fastened to their respective spars at their corners and pulled tight, then held in between with a simple lacing from tip to tip. When fast to boom and gaff, the hoist lines are tied in. Then the mast rings are sewed on.

The three travelers are sections of bicycle spokes or brass rod of the same size, bent as shown to fit the deck. They extend to within $\frac{1}{4}$ " of each side. A ring is put on two of them and they are driven into the deck over a deck beam. The third or after traveler has no ring and goes over the tiller. Hang the rudder on two pintles, one at top and one at bottom, as shown.

The sheet lines and rudder rigs now go on. A line is tied to the outboard end of the tiller, passed through a screw eye in the end of the boom, thence through a toggle, thence through the screw eye in the other end of the boom that is locked into the eye in the mast, back through the toggle, and tied. These toggles are made of pieces of toothbrush handles cut with a hack saw to approximately $\frac{1}{16}$ " x $\frac{1}{8}$ " x $\frac{1}{2}$ ". Two holes are drilled with a pin drill the size of the cords. When moved backward or forward, the toggles hold the sheet wherever it is set.

The other booms are controlled in a similar way except that the sheet line is tied to the traveler ring.

The arrangement of the rudder tension is illustrated. There is a screw eye in the mainmast and another in the deck, and a line from an elastic band is toggled here so that the tension may be adjusted by the toggle. When the wind hits the mainsail, the rudder is pulled to steer the boat away from the wind instead of letting her jump into the wind. Adjustment of the tiller tension will give you the right control of the boat.

You can learn much about sailing with a rig like this if you will stake out three buoys on a small pond and then try to sail this boat around the course. In fact, with three or four boats you can run real races since you can follow around the edge of the pond and readjust the sails each time the boat touches, thereby continuing the circuit of the course. Thus you get experience in sailing in all directions regardless of the wind.

E. Armitage McCann (ca. 1930)

List of Materials

No. of Pieces	Description	T.	W.	L.
4	Sides and bottom	$\frac{1}{4}$	$3\frac{1}{4}$	24
1	Lower ribs	$\frac{1}{4}$	$3\frac{1}{4}$	24
	Inside keel and deck beams	$\frac{1}{4}$	$\frac{1}{4}$	70
2	Spars	$\frac{1}{4}$	$\frac{1}{4}$	30
2	Spars	$\frac{3}{8}$	$\frac{3}{8}$	24
1	Keel	$\frac{1}{4}$	$3\frac{1}{4}$	24
1	Inside and outside stem	$\frac{1}{4}$	$\frac{3}{8}$	10
3	Deck	$\frac{1}{8}$	2	24
	30 small galvanized screw eyes.			
	2 small screw hooks.			
	19 small brass curtain rings for mast rings.			
	1 paper brass pins.			
	$\frac{1}{4}$ oz. $\frac{1}{4}$ -in. No. 20 brass escutcheon pins.			
	Screws for keel and bowsprit.			
	White fishline about No. 3 cord size for rigging.			
	About 1 ft. No. 20 bare copper or brass wire.			
	2 bicycle spokes or brass rod of same size for travelers.			
	NOTE: All dimensions are given in inches.			

BURNHAM BOAT BUILDING & DESIGN



PHOTO BY TODD HARRINGTON

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San Francisco's original *Alma*...



...and Harry Duncan's Footie Scale version.

I'll bet you know of at least one chap in your midst who would dearly love to either design, then construct or build from plans, a model sailboat but lacks the knowledge and/or the confidence in himself to even try. I know one very well, he is myself, the result being I am quietly resigned toward acceptance that my forte, indeed if I do have one, lies not in that direction.

This is a story about model scows and about another chap living in the Waikato, a farming region of New Zealand's North Island. Harry Duncan, a friend of mine who built to the 12" Footie measurement size not one, but two, RC scows, both named *Alma*.

One is of the San Francisco-based blunt bow *Alma* which Harry, a contract draughtsman, built first. He wanted to create both of them as stand-off scale models, making them as simple as possible and principally using balsa and items like dowelling and various odds and ends, material that went a long way towards keeping the cost down.

He wanted to also prove that balsa is alive and well and, though light and requiring careful sealing and several coats of paint both inside and outside of the hull of a model yacht, can be waterproofed and, though known for aircraft modeling, is also applicable to model sailboats. (No, you wouldn't build a full-size yacht to circumnavigate the world out of balsa though!)

Masts and booms were made of dowel and bamboo skewers, sails of dacron in the US version of the scow and in the New Zealand version that later followed, each model taking about a month to complete before being beautifully photographed by Harry himself on Turtle Lake in the region. Two-channel radio control was fitted and, with keels attached after extensive test sailing, the boats sailed rather beautifully.

The original New Zealand *Alma* was a deck-scow built in Auckland in 1902 and was 79'6" in length and schooner-rigged. She is still around in 2009 and moored up a creek in the North Island but sans masts and sails and was being used as a power barge up to a few years ago. The model built by Harry has lift-off timber shown aboard which is built onto a hatch needed for access to RC equipment carried inside the hull. The New Zealand scows were built in Auckland and were used to transport shingle and timber among other materials from often shallow and inaccessible inland creeks, then under full sail returning to Auckland. They were nautical work-

Two Model "Shippy" Gals Called *Alma*

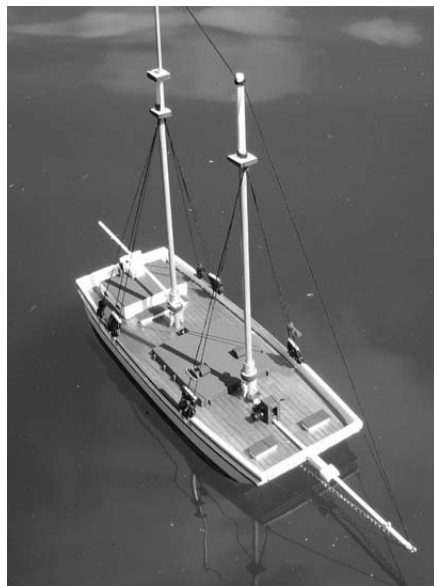
By Mark Steele

horses built with boxlike strong hulls and are still remembered and still "loved to death" by many New Zealanders.

The US *Alma* of 1891 is 80' long and is very active and sails the bays in San Francisco, as some readers will well know. The photograph in this article is shown courtesy of Michael Slater of *Boating San Francisco*. Between 1850 and the early 20th century, over 400 of these scows were constructed around that area and, like the *Alma*, hauled a wide variety of cargoes. She is now part of San Francisco's Maritime National Historical Park's fleet of historic vessels.

If you are in San Francisco, or with easy access to getting there, go on, take a cruise on the scow *Alma*. You'll enjoy it, then you'll want to contact my mate Harry Duncan and you'll be eager to build a little foot-long sailing model of the same scow, I can almost guarantee it!

Bird's eye view of Harry's *Alma*.



The two *Alma* models rafted up.

Harry and his Footie Scale scows.



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The International Scene

Think of the multitude of devices using GPS information! Then realize that malicious jamming of US's aging Global Position System satellites is all too easy. (UK tests using a low-powered jammer destroyed GPS readings on a ship 20 nm away.) But jamming of Europe's soon-to-arrive Galileo, Russia's existing Glonass, and China's existing Compass systems, all equivalents to GPS, may be somewhat harder.

Transit times through the Panama Canal dropped to an average of 23.06 hours from 31.55 hours.

Danish researchers found that that ships emitted less sulphur, NOx, and particles than expected, at least, in Denmark.

Thin Place and Hard Knocks

Ships sank or nearly sank: Really nasty weather, locally described as a "black southeaster," sank a fishing trawler outside Mossel Bay in South Africa and only one of six fishermen was rescued.

Typhoon Parma did in the small container ship *Silver Sea* off Taiwan. Only three of the crew of 14 were rescued from the wreckage floating on the surface when rescuers arrived.

In Malaysia, the dredger *Raja Akasia* was en route to dredge the channel at Bengkulu but succumbed to 20' waves and capsized. It was later towed to shore, still carrying its crew of 13.

On the River Seine, the motorized barge *Tasmanie*, loaded with 600 tons of coal, collided with the cargo ship *Civra*, which had just loaded 7,500 tons of corn for Syria. The barge's crew was rescued by a pilot boat from Rouen.

South of Tokyo, the fishing vessel *Dai-ichi No. 1* listed sharply and then capsized, trapping three men under the floorboards of the rear cabin. They had plenty of air but no food and little to drink and the thin fiberglass hull let some light in. On the fifth day rescuers arrived and banged on the hull to let those inside know help was at hand.

Ships collided and allided: On the Schekсна River (part of Russia's Volga-Balt waterway system), the tanker *Volgoflot-5* carrying heavy oil collided with the *Okskiy-62* carrying stone. Both were extensively damaged and holed and one (not specified which) ended up sunken with its upper parts above water.

In northern China at Caofeidian, the Belgian cargo ship *Lowlands Prosperity*, which was tied up at a refueling dock, leaked oil after the *Jinyou No. 1* crashed into it. Deep fog prevented an immediate assessment of the spill's extent.

In Brazil, about four miles off the port of Santos, the container ship *Alianca Europa* collided with bulkier *Diamond Ocean*. Both were severely mauled and two containers fell into the sea. Neither ship had a pilot on board.

Ships ran aground: At Kolkata (Calcutta), the tanker *Suvarna Swarajya* grounded in a silting channel (3.7 metres instead of the announced 5.5 metres) after it veered off to pass a dredger.

In Thessaloniki Bay, the container ship *Rozza A* ran aground and the master refused aid while he tried to get his vessel afloat again without hiring tugs.

In Singapore waters, the container ship *Maersk Kendal* ran aground while transiting the Traffic Separation Scheme there. Other shipping was not affected.

A single photo posted on the internet was the only news publicly available that the 1974-built *St Kitts/Nevis*-flagged offshore

Beyond the Horizon

By Hugh Ware

tug/supply vessel *Kalos* had gone firmly aground on a beach, possibly in Nigeria.

Fire and explosion took a toll: A fire on the offshore supply vessel *Huahai* at Hong Kong hurt nobody but gave firefighters a real workout because of dense smoke and extremely high temperatures.

The Dutch Emergency Towing Vessel *Waker* ("guardian" in English) had an engine room fire and is being scrapped. The big tug was built in 1977 as the *Smit Houston*, was Greenpeace's *Solo* for some years and was then acquired by the Dutch Coast Guard.

Humans got hurt or died: Near Dutch Harbor in Alaska a Filipino crewman on the Prince Rupert-bound bulkier *Corona Infinity* neatly folded his uniform at the vessel's stern. What happened next is unknown but he went missing.

Other events: Shortly after leaving Lae, New Guinea, the landing craft ro-ro *Lihir Express* developed a severe list and dumped its cargo of containers. Other vessels belonging to the same company towed the vessel back to Lae.

Off Nova Scotia, high winds caused the pipe-lay vessel *Lorelay* to veer off course by 1510' and so the pipeline was cut loose. The deviation also damaged the "stinger," a projecting structure that is essential in the process of welding 20-metre sections of pipe together and laying them on the sea bottom, so the ship and the its crew of about 200 returned to shore. The ship is laying a natural-gas pipeline 107 miles long.

At the German port of Bremerhaven, 18 containers on the *Husky Racer* suddenly toppled overboard or onto a neighboring vessel and 34 other containers were seriously damaged. Nobody was hurt.

In the UK, the large seagoing tug *Eide Wrestler* was berthing a large barge carrying a dredger that will dig the trench for a second Tyne Tunnel when a pilot became aware that the tug's Swedish master had been drinking heavily. He was arrested.

In Australia, the strong smell of battery acid forced the partial evacuation of a Melbourne container terminal. It was traced to about 100 litres that had leaked from a container on the *Ital Moderna*.

In the Persian Gulf, a Russian sailor fell overboard from the chemical tanker *Peterpaul* one night. He was rescued five-and-a-half hours later by a helicopter from *HMS Kent* and returned to his ship.

Off Holland, the coaster *Aivita* lost 50 bundles of lumber. Some were quickly found and towed to Terschelling.

Gray Fleets

A gunner's mate on the destroyer *USS Rampage* (DDG-61) was doing routine maintenance on a M240 machine gun when he accidentally fired three rounds into Poland. No known damage ashore.

Spain's four 1980s-vintage subs will return to full operational status by next February. They have been operating under restrictions (including operating at depths of less than 50 metres) after the *Tramontana* near-

ly sank when a hull fitting failed while at a depth of 300 metres.

Will the Royal Navy forgo one of its two planned aircraft carriers? News reports stated that the US-designed F-35 fighter that will equip the carriers has become too expensive and one carrier will be transformed into a cheaper-to-equip amphibious commando ship using helicopters instead of the Joint Strike Fighter. But a spokesman maintained that the government is fully committed to building two carriers. (However, it should be noted that a general election and a Strategic Defense Review are in the near future.)

The aircraft carrier *USS Dwight D. Eisenhower* (CVN-69) refueled a Coast Guard helicopter and provided a flight surgeon for the chopper's rescue of three Canadians capsized 300 miles off Cape Hatteras, North Carolina.

It has been confirmed that a French shipyard will build a *Mistral*-type helicopter carrier for Russia and Russia will get a license to construct four more of the warships. Each of the power-projection-and-command vessels can carry 16 heavy helicopters, up to 900 troops, four landing craft, and 40 tanks.

White Fleets

The world's newest and largest cruise ship, the *Oasis of the Seas*, had a very rough trans-Atlantic voyage from its builder in Turku, Finland, to Ft Lauderdale, Florida, for its inaugural cruise. First, the 6,300-passenger vessel had to squeeze under the Great Belt Bridge in the Baltic, and since its telescopic smokestacks barely allowed enough room, the ship speeded up to sink lower in the water. Once out in the Atlantic, it met hurricane-force winds and waves 60' high but, happily, no passengers were aboard. (The ship, five times the size of the *Titanic*, is equipped with so many amenities that one travel expert suggested that such ships should never leave port. "Who would know the difference?")

The small (161') passenger boat *Flipper* ran aground while approaching its berth on the German island of Neuwerk because strong east winds had lowered the water levels. The 48 passengers were taken to safety, first by the ship's lifeboat and then on six trailers drawn by a tractor. (In older days they would be carried by horse-drawn wagons. Read "The Riddle of the Sands" by Erskine Childers for a vivid description of these sand flats and tide-driven wandering channels. It's also one of the world's best spy stories.)

On the Ohio River, the paddleboat excursion vessel *Belle of Louisville* was taking about 300 people for a scenic tour when strong winds pushed the 93-year-old vessel into a moored barge or drydock. "The paddlewheel is pretty much wrecked," a witness told newsmen and the vessel was towed back to Louisville. Several people suffered minor injuries, mostly from being knocked down by the impact.

At Palm Beach Florida, the 6,659-gt, 1964-built *Palm Beach Princess* has been operating twice-daily cruises that offer gambling as well as gourmet meals and activities traditional on other cruise ships. Massive failure of its main engine meant the ship had to rely on two smaller engines for propulsion so the Coast Guard required that the company use two tugs to help the ship in and out of its berth. The tugs cannot handle the ship in choppy seas so there have been numerous voyage cancellations. (There is an October 2010 international deadline requiring extensive rebuilding of old-

er cruise ships so do not plan on using the elderly *Palm Beach Princess*, originally a Finnish ferry, very much longer.)

Those That Go Back and Forth

An elderly man with severe pulmonary problems was flown from the Plymouth-Roscoff ferry *Pont-Aven* to a hospital in Cornwall.

Two Dutch tourists were killed when a double-deck high-speed ferry collided with a sand barge somewhere between Hong Kong and Guangzhou.

Eight schoolchildren died when an overcrowded "country boat" overturned on the Chaliyar River in India.

Speeding along at a reported 25kts, the 40' ferry *Marko Polo* nosed up into the bushes on the Croatian island of Sit while en route between Sibenika and Zadar. Several weeks later the ferry remained trapped and so were the 18 private vehicles it carried. The car owners were unhappy.

The overnight Scottish ro-ro ferry *Hrossey* encountered heavy seas off Fair Isle and a sudden roll to port hurt four passengers and damaged several cars.

In Shetland, the Scottish passenger ro-ro *Linga* lost control as it docked at Laxo and wiped out one of seven dolphins (a collection of pilings) at the terminal. Inspectors from Lloyds and technicians from Rolls Royce (makers of the control system) quickly headed for Laxo.

In the Philippines some time back, a major ferry operator was ordered to stop all operations because its *Princess of the Stars* sank last year, killing more than 800 passengers and crew. Now one of its ferries can resume operations and about 200 government personnel were on board during the first voyage to assess the crew's safety training. The company's remaining vessel, at most carrying 1,000 passengers or more, will resume operations as soon as the safety audits are completed.

State inspectors found that the Lake Champlain Bridge linking New York and Vermont had deteriorated dangerously faster than expected so the bridge was closed. The nearest bridge is 90 miles away and a private ferry 15 miles away was swamped with new customers and another ferry service 25 miles away quickly expanded its hours. But the lake freezes over in winter so New York State announced it would provide a 24/7 free ferry service in December using a ferry and an icebreaker. But first, archeological digs must check out the proposed ferry landing because it is the 18th century military site of British and French first.

A New York judge ruled that a suit by a man claiming injury damages due to the ferry crash at Staten Island in 2003 was "less than credible." Among conflicting stories told by the man was his claim that he had walked to Manhattan's Battery Park after the ferry crash, which happened miles away across New York Harbor at Staten Island.

In the Ukraine, a hotel bought five three-deck, 200-passenger icebreaker "yachts" to run on the Moskva River between the hotel and the Novospassky convent in winter-time. (The convent or monastery is an imposing relic with a fascinating history but hardly seems worthy of this ice-breaking fleet.)

Illegal Imports

Custom agents in Norway stopped an arrival from Denmark. He had a tarantula in one of his bags and that prompted a thorough

body search, which revealed 24 snakes in stockings duct-taped to his body.

People-smuggling across the Gulf of Aden continued. A passenger was asphyxiated in the engine room of a vessel carrying hopefuls from Somalia to Yemen and then the vessel capsized and 43 out of 142 died.

In another incident that same day, ten others died by asphyxiation in an engine room and three were beaten to death.

And the Belgian frigate *Louise Marie* (F931) spotted a sinking small boat and rescued 38 people although a survivor said 46 had been on board.

In the Indian Ocean, the LNG tanker *LNG Pioneer* picked up 27 survivors (out of possibly 39) from a sunken vessel near Cocos Island and took the asylum-seekers to the Australia detention center on Christmas Island.

As the Panamanian freighter *Island of Luc* headed downstream on the Congo River, several stowaways were discovered. They were beaten and then thrown overboard, each with a five-litre can tied to his body. One drowned and three others were rescued, and the ship and its crew were put under arrest at Matadi.

Metal-Bashing

Three workers were crushed to death when a steel plate fell on them while they were scrapping a ship at the Crystal Ship-breaking Yard in Bangladesh. It was the second fatal accident in a month.

Nature

In New Zealand, numerous Greenpeace members boarded the bulkier *East Ambition* as it approached Tauranga and locked themselves to the anchor chain and four cranes. Unfurled banners expressed the greenies' dismay that the ship was carrying palm kernel to be used as animal feed, a harvest contributing to deforestation in Malaysia and Indonesia.

At Nantes-Saint Nazaire in France, Greenpeace protesters tried to impede the unloading of 15,000 tons of palm-based cattle feed from the *Ignir Castle*, same reason as above.

Threats of action by Greenpeace forced diversion of two Russian ships from Le Havre to other ports. The *Kapitan Mironov* and *Kapitan Lus* were to have picked up nuclear material for reprocessing and eventual return to France.

In the Gulf off Mexico near Texas in rough weather, the lightering tanker *Krymsk* had just off-loaded 70,475 metric tons of Arabian crude oil from the far-bigger supertanker *Vega Star* (too deep to enter the Houston Ship Channel at full load) when the 166' lightering service vessel *AET Endeavor* somehow punched a hole in one of the *Krymsk's* fuel tanks. The Coast Guard considered the 18,000gal spill of No 6 fuel oil to be relatively minor because it was offshore, and dispersants were used.

In Portugal, while unloading at San Mateus, the chemical-oil tanker *Blu Star* dumped enough oil to pollute six miles of local beaches to an unspecified degree. (Worldwide, there were numerous other spills, none particularly serious.)

Off West Australia, work continued on drilling an intersecting hole that could be plugged to stop the flow of oil from the West Atlas mobile offshore drilling platform. Then fire ravaged the unmanned platform. At last reports, the bore had been intercepted on the fifth attempt and was plugged and the fire was out. The spill of thousands of barrels lasted ten weeks.

Nasties and Territorial Imperatives

Nigerian rebels made some sort of peace and now maybe that restive but oil-rich country can start getting its affairs in order. That would be appreciated by the foreign companies trying to increase oil production from 1.7 million barrels a day back to the 2006 level of 2.6 million barrels.

Somali pirates continued as before but did threaten to execute mariners on the Chinese bulkier *De Xin Hai* if China executed its "all-out" efforts to recover the vessel.

Pirates took two elderly Brits from their yacht *Lynn Rival* and rival groups fought over which would get any ransom (\$7 million was mentioned).

Israeli commandos boarded the Anti-guan-flagged "humanitarian aid" ship *Francop* and found arms and ammo from Iran concealed in several containers. They were intended for Lebanon's Hezbollah.

Odd Bits

As history buffs know, the British frigate *HMS Shannon* beat the American frigate *USS Chesapeake* (commanded by "Don't give up the ship" James Lawrence) off Massachusetts in 1813 and took it to Halifax. Less known is that some of the timbers of the *Chesapeake* ended up as part of an obsolete watermill on the River Meon in Wickham, Hampshire, in the UK. But locals there know of the timbers' source because the structure is named the *Chesapeake Mill*.

Hurricane Ida caused a lift boat (a self-propelled jackup barge) to break free and eventually it damaged an offshore oil platform 80 miles south of New Orleans. Two anxious residents called for help and a Coast Guard helicopter took them off before weather conditions got too bad.

Barge traffic on the Mississippi River came to a stop at Clarksville, Missouri, when a dam and lock became broken. The Corps of Engineers had spare parts at the Mel Price dam and lock and a towboat and a barge-crane took them to Clarksville. Meanwhile, river traffic in both directions waited and it was the peak of the agricultural shipping season.

At Long Beach/Los Angeles, US Customs officials searched a container before it was shipped to the Netherlands and found an immaculately restored 1965 Volkswagen bus. Checking its numbers, they found that it had been stolen in Spokane, Washington, way back in 1974. The original owner wants her bus back but it now belongs to the insurance company and may be worth \$25,000, far more than she can afford.

Head-Shakers

It was a long time ago (1996) but the cruiser *USS Yorktown* (CG-84) once served as the testbed for the Navy's Smart Ship program. The heavily computerized cruiser was controlled by an integrated control center on the bridge. An operator there mistakenly entered a zero as a divisor in an equation. That resulted in an infinite answer and that was mathematically unacceptable so the computer crashed. In a ripple effect, so did all other computers on the ship, the cruiser became dead in the water, so powerless, motionless, helpless that it couldn't even send out an SOS for several hours. The Smart Ship program was extensively revised and the Navy later deftly (and accurately but...) dismissed the episode as "an engineering local area network casualty."

As many Shallow Water Sailors already know, Debbie and I became the proud owners of Richard Zapf's (via second owner Silas Yates) *Red Zinger* in August of '08. The following is an account of our first launch and cruise, August 29 through September 9, 2009, on Penobscot Bay, Maine.

It's Friday afternoon. The newly painted *Red Zinger* is perched on her trailer at the bottom of the launching ramp at Winterport Marine, awaiting the tide. Debbie and I have spent the better part of a couple of weeks painting and repairing her over the summer, we hope now that she is ready to sail. We are worried that having been out of the water for eight years she will sink at the dock. By 3pm the boat is floating, mostly.

Water is coming in at what at first appears to be an alarming rate, but some vigorous pumping for a few minutes proves adequate and we pull her all the way off the trailer and power over to the dock. *Zinger* has an electric start Yamaha on her stern which ordinarily makes starting the motor a snap. I am so nervous that I keep hitting the stop button instead of the start button and wondering why she won't fire. With tropical storm Danny on the way we delay the trip down the Penobscot River and simply put the boat at the dock. I elect to spend the night aboard to make sure she doesn't sink there.

On Sunday the leak seems to have slowed to a manageable trickle and I set out for Stockton Springs. Motoring down the river is uneventful, *Zinger* happily does almost 7kts under power. She seems happy to be afloat, although clearly with some ambiguous feelings as water begins to collect more rapidly beneath the floorboards.

Rounding Fort Point, I kill the engine and raise the mainsail, which I can do from the cockpit. The southwest breeze is light but *Zinger* moves easily through the water. I am immediately pleased by her speed in light air. Once she is at the mooring in Stockton Springs, Debbie boards and we provision. I row over to look at Stan Blake's Bolger-designed *Alert*. Formerly junk rigged, *Alert* has crossed the Atlantic Ocean twice. Stan has replaced the junk rig with a 450sf gaff rigged mainsail. At 29' with massive leeboards, *Alert* looks sturdy and capable.

Monday afternoon, with a gusty northwester that we hope will die down, Debbie and I put a reef in the main, get Abbey and Jack (the dogs) settled in, and head down the Western Passage of Penobscot Bay, aiming for Cradle Cove. The breeze is on the beam, gusting around 20kts, and *Zinger* is flying. The GPS has her at 6.7-7kts. She is easy to handle, nimble without feeling flighty. There is an uncomfortable amount of water sloshing down below.

We round Grindel Point and run into Gilkey Harbor, skirting the shore of Warren Island and running west to Cradle Cove where Debbie drops the hook. Debbie does not like the anchoring arrangement from the bow cockpit. It takes about ten minutes to pump the water out of the boat. I am beginning to notice that she doesn't leak much at anchor, but a fair amount underway. I'm still hoping she'll "take up" and that the leaking will diminish.

Tuesday morning we power over the bar by Warren Island, exploiting *Zinger's* 2' draft (which still feels like a lot to me, accustomed as I am to *Wandering Bark's* 6" draft). Entering the bay, we are pleased to see new friends Jack and Shirley on their home-built 39' fer-

The Red Zinger's First Cruise

By Paul Follansbee
Reprinted from the *Shallow Water Sailor*

rocement sloop powering south down the bay. They are headed for a harbor in the Mussel Ridge Channel. We are headed for Rockland. The breeze is southerly and light. *Zinger* clearly loves light air and we gently, but swiftly, tack down the bay, reaching Rockland in the early afternoon. There we meet Debbie's friends Mark and Katherine who come aboard for supper and an evening sail. The breeze is now 12kts from the south, we reach out past Owl's Head and watch the near full moon rise above the lighthouse. A quick run back to Rockland and the anchor is down at dark.

Wednesday is highlighted by a spirited sail with friends Connie and Robert out to Vinalhaven and back to Rockland. For the first time we reef while underway. *Zinger* has jiffy reefing on the wishbone and we can reef her from the cockpit without lowering the sail. Very nice.

On Thursday, Debbie and I run across the Bay to Perry Creek on Vinalhaven. The weather, for the fifth day in a row, is clear and sunny, with unlimited visibility, it feels almost unnatural. Safely anchored in Perry Creek, which is a lovely estuary off Fox Island Thorofare, I manage, to my embarrassment, to fall overboard while trying, in vain, to get a cell phone signal. (I save the phone but lose the beer, my priorities momentarily out of order.) Fortunately this experience teaches me that it is possible to get back aboard *Zinger* without the use of a ladder (57° water is quite a motivator).

Friday again finds the skies clear (this is getting ridiculous) so we head southeast for Isle au Haut. There is almost no wind but somehow *Zinger* manages to make headway and the outgoing tide helps to push us along so we eat a lazy breakfast and just absorb the incredible views of Vinalhaven, the islands of Merchant's Row, Deer Isle, the Camden Hills, and Cadillac Mountain. By 1pm the southwest breeze fills in a bit and we reach happily towards the Isle Au Haut Thorofare. Passing the pretty lighthouse at the entrance, we run wing and wing up the Thorofare.

Normally I sail into anchorages, but the Thorofare is narrow and crowded and I do not relish running downwind into a harbor I've never been in before, so reluctantly we drop the main and fire up the Yamaha (our daughter, Rebecca, did this singlehanded under sail in her 43' cutter, she is not proud of us). On our first pass we find the one and only honor system rental mooring, pick it up, and put the \$20 in the Coke bottle taped to the high buoy.

Taking advantage of the short row to the town dock, we walk the dogs on the Island, buying gas and books and chicken at the Island store. After chatting with several islanders, we hike some of the Acadia trails, the dogs and we are thrilled with the Island.

After supper aboard we watch the now full moon rise above the spire of the old Congregational Church that sits on a hill overlooking the harbor. It is far too beautiful a scene for me to try to describe.

Saturday, after walking the dogs ashore, we reluctantly leave Isle au Haut (we would love to stay and really explore the island but Becca can meet us in Rockland and sail for a

couple of days and that takes precedence). A weak cold front has passed through overnight so we have a brisk northerly to help us run south of Vinalhaven and across to Rockland. The morning air again is crisp and clear and the temperature is in the mid 60s. Welcome to September in Maine.

As we round the southern tip of Vinalhaven and pass Carver's Harbor we elect to tack inside Hurricane Island (home of the Outward Bound Program), then slip out again past Greens Island, White, and Spectacle Islands. The wind moderates and we shake out the reef. By 2pm the anchor is down in Rockland (the south end of the harbor, near the launching ramp) where we hope to meet Rebecca in the morning. The wind is forecast to blow 10-20kts from the north overnight, which makes me nervous about anchoring in the southern end of the harbor, but we don't seem too exposed and the south end is more convenient to shore and stores.

The 30kt northerly that rolled and bounced us all night reminded me that one should never choose convenience over a snug anchorage. The dogs complained all night and we got very little sleep. Rowing ashore to get supplies Sunday morning and pick up Rebecca was a bit of an adventure as the northerly remained fresh until about 10am. Afraid it would die out completely, we set sail for Vinalhaven as quickly as we could. More faithful than we had any right to expect, the northerly got us sweetly across the Bay and into Fox Island Thorofare. On its last breaths we outran a Nonsuch 30 and a couple of sloops past the Sugar Loaves and North Haven.

As we tack up Seal Cove towards Perry Creek, water begins rushing across the floorboards, causing a momentary panic as I assume the boat is falling apart. Fortunately the problem was simply tacking and heeling the other way, forcing water from one side around the centerboard trunk to the new lee side of the bilge.

We anchored again under near full moon, enjoying good dinner, some guitar playing, reading, chatting. Becca seems to approve of the boat. We are all, three dogs and three people, quite comfortable in *Zinger's* surprisingly roomy interior.

Monday, after a quick breakfast, with Bec at the helm we sail off the anchor and tack in a rising southerly back west through the Thorofare, losing to a lovely Friendship sloop. *Zinger* is clearly fast but close hauled is just not a cat yawl's best point of sail. Still, the race is pretty even.

Eventually the breeze forces us to reef again (I am beginning to realize that *Zinger's* light air ability also means we have to reef a bit sooner than we would reef *Wandering Bark*, fortunately reefing is easier). *Zinger* heels until her chine bites the water, then really firms up. I am really starting to enjoy the boat. Now if she would just do a better job keeping the water out.

Tuesday I decide that we should run back up the bay to Stockton Springs. *Zinger's* leak and a problem with the plank supporting the Yamaha make me feel like we may be pushing our luck. Running before a light southerly and watching the free flooding well in the stern fill with water, it occurs to me that perhaps (as Bec suggested the night before) the water in the bilge may be coming from there. Opening the hatch in the cockpit sole, I peer awkwardly towards the stern under the cockpit. Sure enough, there is a little stream of water running along the bottom planks towards the bilge, apparently from the bulkhead which separates the free flooding well from the rest

of the boat. If this is indeed the source of the leak, it would explain why she leaks a lot more while underway. The well, when we're anchored, sits above the waterline but as we begin to move and the hull displaces water, the well sits lower and fills. Two days at the mooring, during which we take on almost no water, seems to support the theory.

We haul the boat on Friday and decide to store her indoors so repairs can be made during the off-season. I have since been getting estimates for sealing the bulkhead and repairing (may need to replace) the transom, but I'm thinking maybe I can make the repairs myself. Overall I am very pleased with the boat. She sails beautifully with very little fuss or effort (as Bolger describes in his article about her) and the accommodations are surprisingly functional and comfortable, it's nice to have a double bed and an enclosed head. She largely retains everything I like about *Wandering Bark*, simplicity, shoal draft, but is faster and more comfortable. Now if I can just make sure she stays afloat...



(I'd be grateful if you'd add an acknowledgement to Richard and to Silas Yates (from whom I bought Zinger). I'm very impressed with Richard's handiwork and how it has held up over 20 years, and Silas took good care of her, and added a permanent deckhouse (the deckhouse takes some getting used to aesthetically, but adds a great deal to the comfort of the boat.)

It's been a somewhat disappointing summer of sailing for my friend, the Amazing Dr Z. His Bolger-designed family cruising boat, *Red Zinger*, which he built last winter (and which we chronicled the turning over of the hull project in our February 1, 1987 issue), has not provided the scintillating performance he had hoped for. *Red Zinger*, at 26' and very roomy, is a move up from his previous Bolger catboat, *Garfield*, which at 15' just did not have the accommodation for a family of four to go cruising in, even for weekends. And while *Garfield* had an impressive turn of speed for a short catboat, Dr Z was after MORE SPEED. Well, *Red Zinger* has the speed all right on a reach or a run, but it was pretty disappointing going to windward.

Now the cat-ketch rig cannot be expected to point really high, but it was slowing and stalling out well off the wind, like out around 60°! Designer Bolger went for a sail and agreed it was behaving peculiarly and subsequently supplied a re-design for the large centerboard. Dr Z hastily constructed this following his summer cruise from Ipswich on the Massachusetts North Shore to Cape Cod and the Islands. On a rainy Thursday, August 27, he installed it on the mooring in Plum Island Sound, and on his usual Friday day off invited me along on a trial sail. It was still cool and gray and raining on and off, but a steady light northeast breeze was blowing.

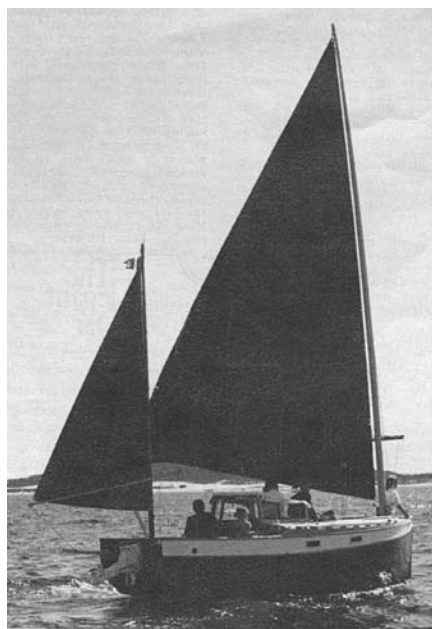
Getting the big main up at the mooring near the mouth of Plum Island Sound, where the tide runs up to 3kts, is not easily done without motor assist for the boats don't point into the wind except on the slack, they are governed by that tidal current. So we had to head *Red Zinger* up with the 10hp Yamaha outboard, a nice, quiet electric start four-stroke unit without the two-stroke buzz and smoke. Then it was off down the channel under sail and out into Ipswich Bay. The northeast breeze was just right for us to reach across to Halibut Point at the tip of Cape Ann and back, a distance of about 18 miles round trip with no tacking involved.

The little mizzen was set to balance the helm and *Red Zinger* just about steered herself along in the steady breeze. With the tide

Red Zinger...

Where's the Zing?

By Bob Hicks
(From *MAIB*, November 15, 1987)



coming in we had plenty of water over the sandbars at the entrance to the Sound for the shallow draft hull and no serious waves were breaking on the bars. The sky was overcast, the showers let up once we got away from shore, and we moved comfortably along. Well, I thought the boat went rather nicely, a nice motion in the smallish 1' swells. But it was time for the going to windward tryouts.

So we headed up until *Red Zinger* began to feel sluggish. The sail was still not showing any signs of luffing but we were obviously pinching as the boat speed dropped off. We took a compass reading at what we felt was the highest angle at which the boat still moved

well and then came about onto the opposite tack for another reading. Several successive tacks with comparisons of our "seat of the pants" feelings about just when the boat began to stall out revealed we were pretty regularly swinging through 100°, 50° off the wind either way. Well, this was still no modern high performance degree of close windedness, but as Dr Z said, "that's a lot better than 60°!"

As we rounded Halibut Point for a look down towards Rockport, a very low and ominous black cloud loomed over the land and appeared to be heading our way, despite the wind direction. There was no indication of squalls in the morning's weather, nor did the NOAA reports warn of any. Still, it looked threatening. So we swung about and began our trip back, still reaching nicely along. We soon outdistanced the looming cloud, causing Dr Z to remark, "When the boat's going 5kts and the weather's going 4.5kts, it's happiness, when the boat's going 4.5kts and the weather's going 5kts, it's grief."

Dr Z's interest in boat speed is not entirely over concern for outrunning bad weather. He likes to beat other boats, a common affliction of sailors. The Ipswich Bay Yacht Club, to which he belongs, holds the usual yacht club races all summer and last year *Garfield*, despite its old timey slow boat look, outran a number of more modern fiberglass boats. Dr Z had hopes for *Red Zinger* doing even more so against the larger boats. But it was not to be, and instead he had to suffer remarks from fellow club members such as, "I didn't know houseboats had pointy ends." Galling indeed. *Red Zinger* has very high sides and plumb ends and a little sort of doghouse over the main hatch, much like a winter entryway. It looks as if it would be slow but it isn't supposed to be. That's where the canker gnaws.

So testing will go on until winter haulout, when Dr Z hopes to be able to make the necessary changes back in the boatshop for another try next year at sailing like the name *Red Zinger* implies. When that electric green spinnaker with the red lightning bolt goes up on a downwind run, the boat comes into its own. It's going the other way that troubles.

John Weiss, President of the National Traditional Small Craft Association, recently submitted a piece (*MAIB*, June 2009, p30) about his visit to the Florida Gulf Coast TSCA Chapter messabout in Cortez where he sailed their A Duckah!. This got me fired up to offer the following comments on the boat:

Fitting a mizzen will make her a cat ketch. The mizzen mast steps in a length of PVC pipe which extends enough above the rear deck to act as a pivot for the tiller, which connects to the rudder via a drag link. Even absent the mizzen, this would be a good arrangement because the long after deck would result in an unwieldy tiller. By varying the relative length of the rudder and tiller arms one can "gear" the rudder for the desired sensitivity.

For the sail itself, almost anything would do. I suspect I had a jib-headed rig with a sprit boom, but I don't find one lying around here. It may well have been the little lug rig I have on Nina now. I have always admired the jib-headed sail with wishbone boom that Dennis Bradley had hanging off the transom of his Old Shoe. I think I will go that route on my next one.

Axon sailed our A Duckah! one day on the Kokopelli and opined that it went fine with the board slack, just floating somewhat below the bottom. A piece of shock cord holds it down for serious windward work but allows it to ride up over obstructions. The board pivots on a piece of copper pipe clamped between the sides of the case by a bolt (stainless, I hope) through the center. This arrangement has never given me any trouble but if the boat spends a lot of time in salt water you might want to check it every spring. Oh! That's right, it's spring all year down there.

You will notice a reefing lash-up on the mast. This worked fairly well but needs refinement. On Nina, where I can easily reach the mast, I have a wheel below the tack which makes it easy to roll the sail on the mast. This is far and away the best system I have ever tried. The long foredeck on your boat really

Notes On the A Duckah!

By Jim Thayer



requires a rope drive. In your spare time you ought to make a hollow mast.

Once you get all the sailing details squared away it is time to think about beach cruising expeditions. With a mizzen mast, the first thought is a boom tent. The A Duckah! has an outboard rim around the hull (great for securing the deck) which would hold hooks for shock cord. Perhaps the tent could have hooks which would hold the fabric right against the gunnel and be tensioned by raising the boom.

The ideal cockpit shelter would be supported by fiberglass tent poles in pockets to support the fabric. The problem is how to connect the ends of the poles to the boat. One could just drill holes in the deck but that would let water in. Some nice bronze sockets let into the deck would be fine, but I don't know where you find them.

While wrestling with the problem on Nina, I concluded that some sail track with slides on the ends of the poles would work.

However, sail track is heavy and expensive. I have yet to find suitable aluminum or plastic track. While contemplating that overhanging lip on the A Duckah! it occurred to me that a plastic pipe could be glued under there. If the pipe had a slit sawn in it and there was a little ball end fitting on each pole end, they could be pulled along to set the shelter in a flash. The shelter, with pole ends trapped in the pipe, could be secured on the foredeck for quick deployment.

Whether these fittings would slide as easily as I envision awaits a real world trial. I hope to get to it before too long. I would suggest straight lengths of plumbing pipe. Cutting the slot calls for some forethought. I tried to halve some black plastic pipe that comes in a roll and wish I had gone at it differently.

The Delaware Ducker will plane in a good breeze. I have never had the A Duckah! out in much wind, except when she was well loaded. On the run from Wahweep to Bullfrog I was booming along downwind when I turned for a canyon entrance and brought the wind abeam. The Old Dear picked up her skirts and planed about a hundred yards before we were blanketed.

Tom Gale fitted out a hull with a bright sheer strake and very little deck. At Starvation he was going gangbusters, but always with several passengers. Running light I think she might plane pretty well.

I think the A Duckah! is about as near an all round boat as you can get. She rows well and sails wickedly. I have sailed her the length of Lake Powell, from Wahweep to Hite, and never had any problem except the lug rig I used on the upper section wasn't too handy.

It seems to me that these hulls would be a nifty little fundraiser for the museum. You could retail them like band members sell chocolates or the volunteers could fit them out and raffle them off. The hulls stack like paper cups so I would be happy to bring a bunch down for the meet next April. Just a thought.

In any case you have got yourself set up for a lot of fun.

Last year I did an article on Dr Z's Bolger-designed cat ketch, *Red Zinger*, discussing the mysterious failure of the boat to move to windward with much "zing." A number of readers responded with helpful suggestions. The consensus was that the sail was the culprit and the sailmaker recut it to fuller proportions.

In early May I joined Dr Z on the first outing, the day *Red Zinger* was launched. The wind was blowing 25kts from the southwest, the sail was double reefed, but *Red Zinger* had plenty of "zing" now on all points of sail. Happiness restored.

July 2 was the day for the big "Chowder Cup" race at Dr Z's local yacht club. Fifteen boats turned out, this is a cruising club and the racing is not of the "dedicated" level. Good thing. No wind. At 10:30 the starting gun was fired out in Ipswich Bay off the Ipswich River channel marker. At 10:45 we crossed the line. At 1:30 we were about a mile closer in to the channel leading back into Plum Island Sound with the coming tide relentlessly pressing us on into the beach. Even the leading boats, a couple of Nonesuch Catboats, were scarcely a mile up Plum Island on the 30-mile triangular course from Ipswich Bay to Newburyport to Halibut Point on Cape Ann to Ipswich Bay.

Plenty of Zing Now

By Bob Hicks
(From *MAIB* August 1, 1988)



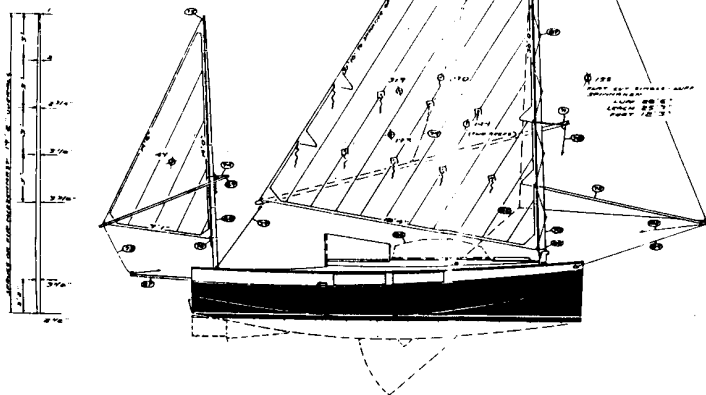
As we dropped out and turned "downwind" (a feathery zephyr of an onshore breeze now) with the tide, I had to congratulate the Dr on his skill in positioning us so nicely for a short, pleasant return trip. Nobody else was so well-placed for dropping out. We set the electric green spinnaker with its brilliant crimson lightning flash and "ran" (more of a toddle) home. Nothing proved.



Dr Z is delighted with his craft with its sail recut.

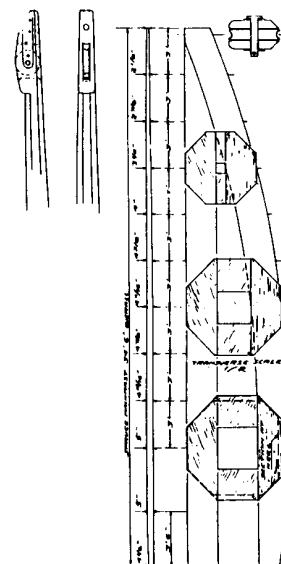
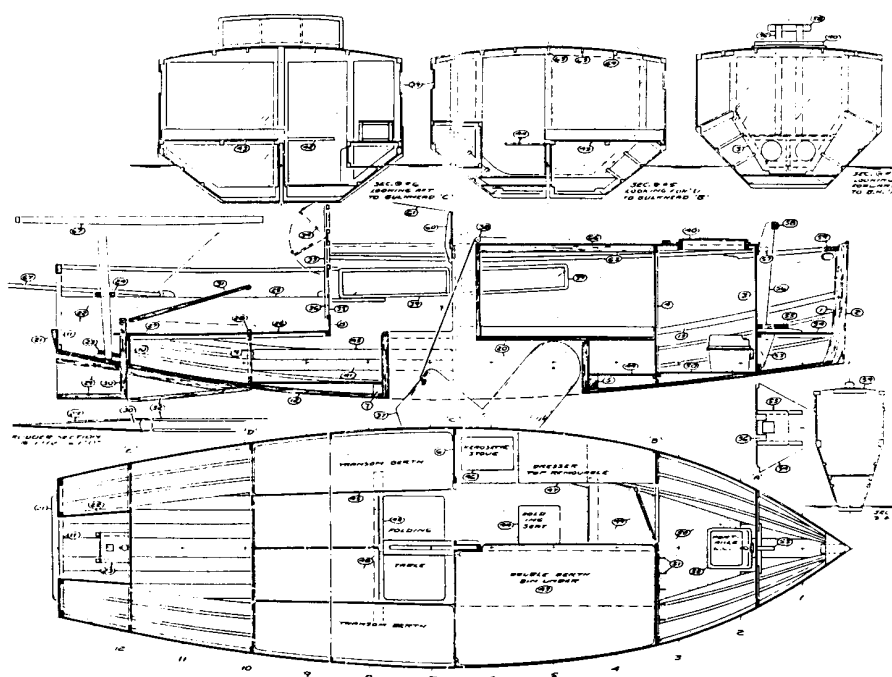
Bolger on Design

"Red Zinger"



#460 – 25'6" x 7'10" x 1'3"
5,200lbs designed displacement
(stripped for the trailer, about two short tons)

This cat yawl has shown a good turn of speed since her mainsail was re-cut with more fullness. She won her class in the Crocker Memorial and showed respectably in menagerie racing out of Plum Island Sound. The layout works well for cruising, though the last time I saw her she still had not had the picture windows installed. Richard Zapf made a good job of building her. Another time I'd make it easier for him by using multiple plywood instead of splined planks for the bottom and single plywood planking with taped seams instead of the double diagonal bilge panels.



DESIGN #460
25'6" x 7'10" x 1'3"
FOR RICHARD F. ZAPF
PHILIP C. BOLGER
DESIGNER
DORCHESTER, MASSACHUSETTS



The takeout near David and Rosemary Wyman's camp. *Red Molly* is over at the water's edge behind a wonderful assortment of TSCA small craft.

Launching at TSCA Meet

We couldn't be happier! This is our third year in business for LaBrie Small Craft and it was our busiest yet. As a result, our self-designed beach cruiser prototype, the "Matinicus 18" sailing peapod which we'd hoped to complete this past spring, took a necessary back seat to customers' projects. Regardless, we were recently able to get the test boat into a barebones condition for a test sail in the Traditional Small Craft Association (TSCA) Downeast Chapter Fall gathering on Sunday, October 18, 2009.

The boat (we named her *Red Molly*) was launched at Toddy Pond, a chain of three ponds totaling about 7.5 miles in length, in Orland, Maine. The day was overcast and cold, with shifting winds and threatening rain as a storm front approached. A typical Maine fall day...

With me was my friend Jonathan Minott, a skilled traditional boat builder (J.C. Minott Boats, LLC) and experienced small craft sailor, a really good guy to have on a test sail!

Because the ramp was busy, *Molly* was launched quickly and without fanfare. Many of the participants were surprised to know that it was the boat's maiden voyage! Last minute tasks, like lacing the sail to the yard, meant that we left well after the TSCA "fleet." Despite the late start, the new boat sailed very well and we eventually managed to catch up with most of the group by the time we got to the take-out. After the long, cold sail a warm woodstove, delicious seafood chowder, and tons of food awaited us. TSCA folks are wonderful people and know how to do things right, special thanks again to David and Rosemary Wyman for their hospitality.

Some Notes on the Matinicus 18 Test Sail

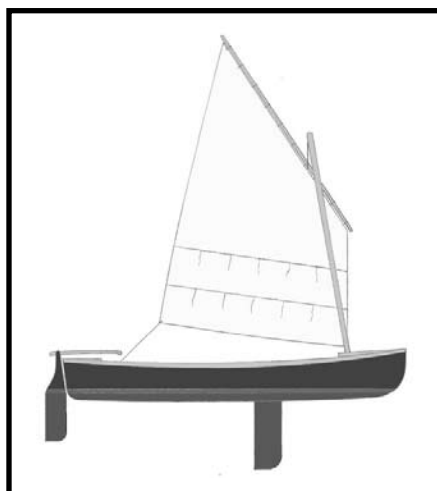
Rudder was well balanced and easy with just the necessary touch of weather helm. When the helm was let go, the boat gently rounded into the wind as expected. Control was very responsive and positive.

The unladen boat trimmed slightly high at the stern where the volume is and where passengers will typically sit. Unlike most peapods, the Matinicus 18 hull is asymmetric and has a flat bottom similar to Herreshoff's "Carpenter."

Our Matinicus 18

Red Molly

By Paul Labrie



The boomless standing lugsail and brailing system, our first real experience with brailing, was simplicity itself and an absolute joy!

Theoretical displacement speed for this boat is 5.8 knots. During our sail we hit a maximum speed of 5.3 knots with much time spent between four and five knots.

The boat was stable and stood up very well when hit by gusts.

The boat was dry. She made little wake and there was never any spray into the cockpit.

Although not designed as a rowing boat, with sail brailed up I comfortably rowed a mile or so through one of the narrow connecting straits where sailing was not practical.

The boat was well received by the TSCA folks who were there, a much-appreciated endorsement from a knowledgeable group.

In the meantime, construction began on the first production boat in November. (*Molly* is our test boat and is not for sale. Sorry.) The new boat will have the same hull, foils, and rig as the prototype but will incorporate newly suggested features and refinements.

LaBrie Small Craft, (207) 570-2300, www.labriesmallcraft.com

Sailing on Sebec Lake

On October 30 we put the Matinicus 18 in at Greeley's Landing on Sebec Lake, a beautiful Maine mountain lake that lies just above the town of Dover-Foxcroft. We had the entire lake to ourselves that day for some sailing tryouts. My friend, Jonathan Minott, and I sailed the boat together for the first part of the day. We purposely started off by making a downwind run across the lake, then returned to the landing for the boat's first real test of its windward performance. The boat sailed very nicely, both pointing and tacking, and handled the gusty fall winds quite well. (Sebec, surrounded by hills, has a reputation for occasionally squirrely winds.) Because we didn't have a photography chase boat with us, we then swapped off sailing the boat solo, each taking turns photographing the boat.

I particularly like the photo showing Jonathan standing on the rail (I'm happy he thought of trying that out) with plenty of freeboard remaining. Other photos also show that crouching on the ends also revealed no instabilities. This is typical peapod stability; Maine lobstermen used these boats to pull traps by hand, putting a foot on the rail and pulling traps up over the side. We were delighted that the boat was true to her ancestry.





Rowing on Garland Pond

On November 8 we put the Matinicus 18 in on Garland Pond, a shallow stream-fed pond about seven miles from the shop for some rowing tryouts. We did not take the sail rig with us this day.

Unlike most peapods, the Matinicus 18 has a flat bottom for shallow water use. (Design draft is 6" at full design displacement of 1100lbs, in testing she has been drawing significantly less than that, as the photos show.) Shallow draft was also designed in for ease in beaching or for drying out, upright, on a tide. We were especially keen on testing rowing in a stiff wind as well as in some shallow water. One of the photos (that's me at the oars) shows us approaching a beaver dam, we were in about 9"-10" of water. A nice fall day in the swamp where it was much warmer than on the lake!



Alan Glanville did warn me. He said if I bought a yacht I would stop using my cruising dinghy. I thought I knew better. Yet he was proved right, I should have listened to this experienced Dinghy Cruising Association member. For four years I concentrated on sailing a 26' Harrison Butter cutter called *Caracole*, and when I was not sailing her I spent every minute of my spare time maintaining her elderly hull and rig. Meanwhile, my old Tideway dinghy languished ashore in a friend's barn, covered in straw. *Baggywrinkle's* varnish dulled, her mahogany planking dried out, and her seams opened up.

It was not all bad, I got lots of deepwater sailing in. *Caracole's* superb sea-kindliness and passage-making ability enabled me to make serious sea passages to France, the Isle of Man, and Northern Ireland. But eventually a change of jobs and home twice in under two years forced the sale of *Caracole* and left a large emotional hole in my life. A boat can really get under your skin. After a bittersweet final passage down the west coast of England from Fleetwood to Watchet in the spring of 2003 delivering *Caracole* to her new home berth, I desperately needed some dinghy sailing therapy. So I rescued *Baggywrinkle* from the barn, brushed the straw off her, and took her straight to the second Semaine du Golfe maritime festival in southern Brittany.

It was very strange to be back afloat in my old cruising dinghy after my years in a four-berth yacht. She felt comfortably familiar but also extremely small. And after her years ashore she also required almost constant pumping out, which gets really depressing after a while. But even in a leaky dinghy, the Semaine du Golfe festival was utterly marvelous. Some 800 boats took part in this awesome event, grouped into eight flotillas of broadly similar vessels. Streams of

With Great Britain's Dinghy Cruisers

The New Seagoing Dinghy

By Roger Barnes
Reprinted from the *Dinghy Cruising*

Association Bulletin #202
Roger Barnes describes *Avel Dro*,
his French Ilur class dinghy,
successor to the little Tideway *Baggywrinkle*

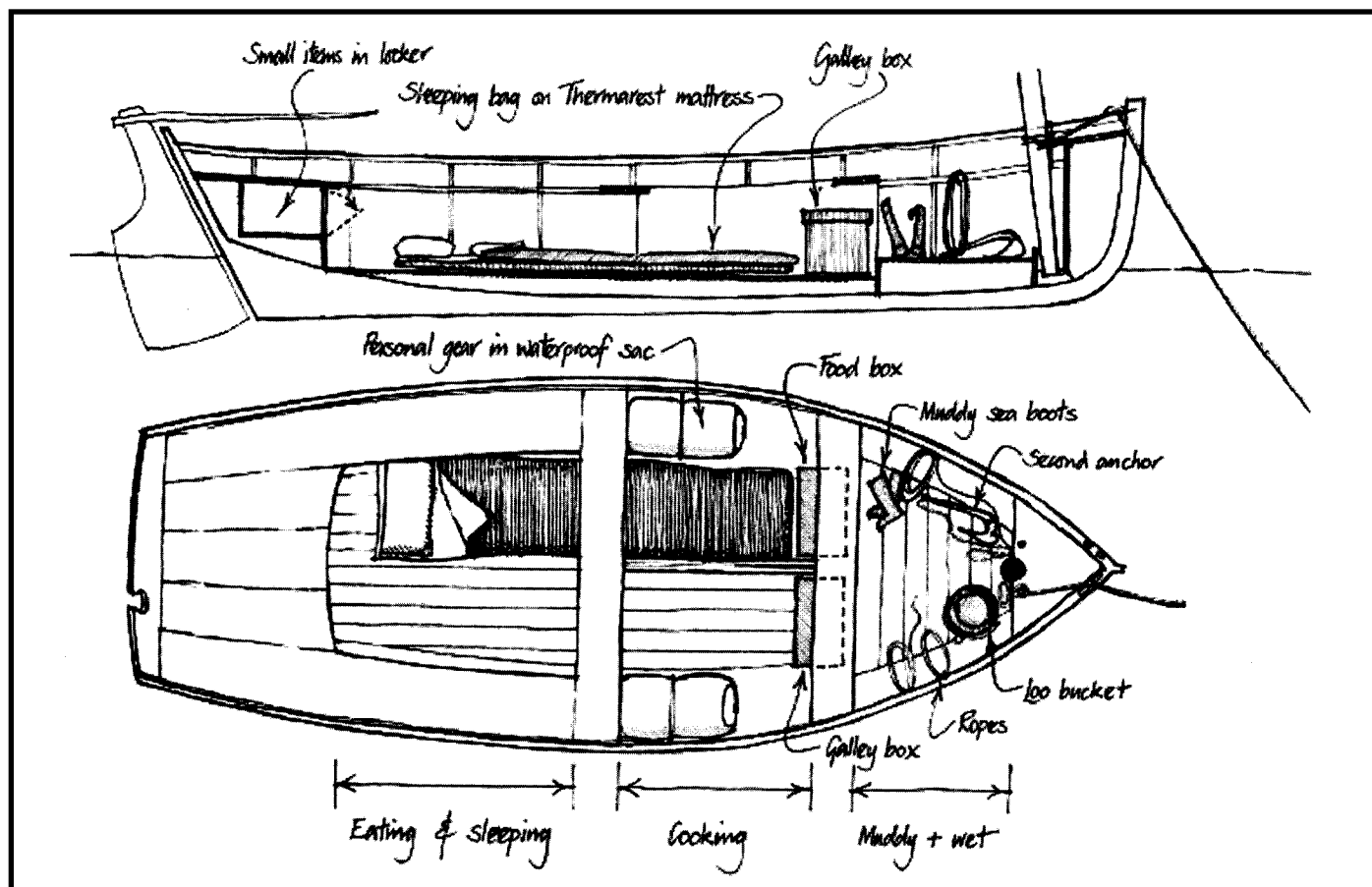


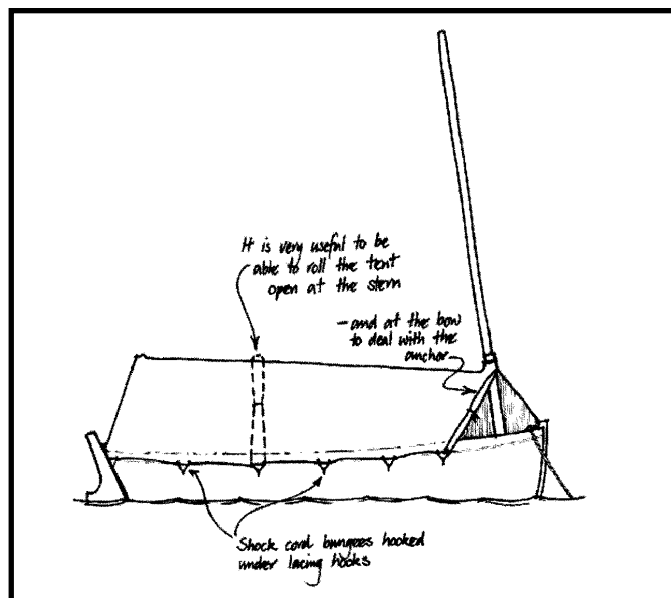
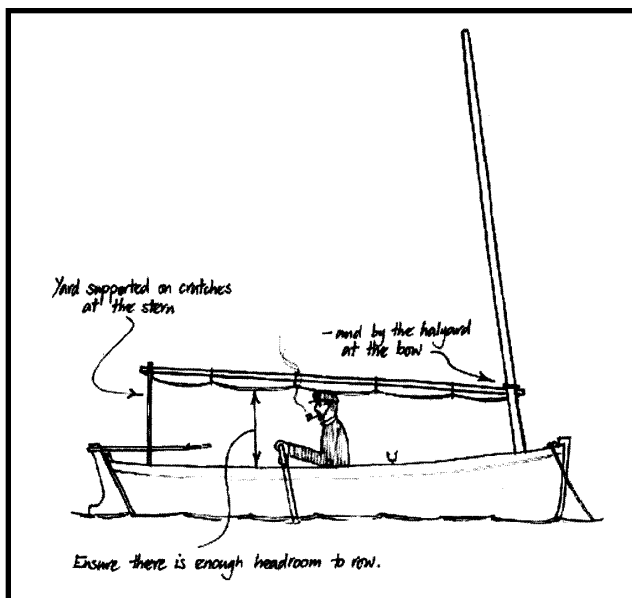
boats merged and diverged and at times the water would be dark with sails as far as the eye could see.

It was striking to rediscover how much more sociable dinghy cruising is than yachting. A yacht is such a self-sufficient little world that her crew are insulated from their surroundings. Yachts are a bit smug, whereas there is nothing like cleaning your teeth over the stem of a dinghy in full view of someone to break the ice.

I spent my first night in the Golfe moored to a quayside near to a French traditional gaffer. Her crew were also sleeping on board under canvas, like myself. They invited me over for evening drinks under their boat tent. This boozy evening, hunkered down between the thwarts of the goemonier *Reine de la Mer*, was the beginning of a long friendship with her owner, Francois Breton, which thrives to this day. And that is just one of many friendships that have had their beginnings from cruising in a dinghy. I lost track of the times I have been invited into peoples' houses for drinks or offered a bed for the night. A dinghy cruiser soon has friends in every port.

Just before I went to the Semaine du Golfe I was invited to start writing a monthly cruising column in a new yachting magazine. I had no expectation that this would last very long, but six years later, and despite going into administration at one point, *Dinghy Sailing Magazine* is still on the news agents' racks and I am still writing the column. In order to have something to write about each month for the magazine's ever-hungry maw, I decided to buy a new dinghy which would hopefully generate lots of articles about adapting it to an effective coastal cruiser. Also, I was keen to put into practice what I had learnt over my many years of sailing *Baggywrinkle*, starting again with a blank slate.





Initially I had decided to buy an Iain Oughtred-designed Ness Yawl like Alan Glanville's, but while I was in France I became re-acquainted with the small boat designs of François Vivier, ubiquitous in Brittany, and in particular with his Ilur design, a beamy and capacious 15-footer with an unstayed mast stepped right in the bows, leaving lots of unencumbered space for dinghy cruising. The Ilur had the air of an admirably practical and seaworthy design and, most importantly, had a nice wide flat floor for sleeping on. I was rather worried about the rig, a single lugsail with very traditional gear, and wondered how practical it would be for serious cruising compared to the much more conventional gunter rig of the Tideway. But surely generations of Breton fishermen could not be wrong?

Through the French Voile Aviron Yahoo Group, I found an Ilur on sale in Saumur on the Loire and a local sailor volunteered to go and look at it for me. His report was so positive that shortly afterwards I took the ferry over to France to buy the boat. Unlike many Ilurs, which are homemade from plans to a variable standard, *Avel Dro* (Breton for *Whirlwind*) had been professionally built by Les Charpentiers Reunis of Cancale. Even though her owner had recently made a number of rough and ready changes to her rudder and transom to accommodate a large outboard moor, and she had a terribly drippy paint job, I could see that she was a decent, well-found boat. Reader, I bought her.

Avel Dro's first boat tent was homemade from polythene tarpaulin material and took the form of a simple ridge tent, using the yard Mark 1 tent.



as the ridge, which is hooked onto the traveller and hauled up the mast to head height and supported by a pair of wooden crutches at the stern. For a quick lash-up it was surprisingly successful and I continued to use this tent for many years until it was eventually replaced with a purpose made canvas cover from The Canvas Windmill in Oxfordshire.

In my Tideway I slept at thwart level by raising the especially reinforced floorboards to create a bed platform. This is a really neat set-up in a leaky dinghy as it kept me well above the bilge water, but the disadvantage is that it means moving every item of gear from its sailing location when in camping mode, and then moving it back again every morning before starting sailing again. This may seem a small matter but the constant packing and re-packing really got to me after a while. It seems absurd to have to allow a whole hour between waking up and starting sailing. Two, if I also wanted breakfast.

So the grand plan was to make *Avel Dro* a streamlined and efficient cruising dinghy. The interior of the boat would be divided into zones for different purposes, based on the traditional hierarchy of a wooden man o' war, from the squalid heads in the bows to the plush officers' quarters in the stern. On *Avel Dro* this would have to be compressed into 15' but the same hierarchy would be discernible. Muddy and smelly stuff would be kept right forward. This would be where sea boots, muddy anchors and the chuck-it bucket would live. Amidships there would be the galley area and astern of that a salubrious zone for lounging and sleeping in, into which no squalor would ever penetrate. This, at least, was the plan.

The galley setup.



The galley arrangement on *Baggywrinkle* was transferred almost unchanged to *Avel Dro*. I made two new plywood boxes to fit under the forward thwart, either side of the centreboard case, one to become the larder box and the other the galley box, which would contain the cooker and pans. But unlike on *Baggywrinkle*, where the cooking stove was moved onto the stern seat each time I needed to cook, on *Avel Dro* the galley box was designed to stay in the same place and designed so the stove could be cooked on in situ. I bought a new stove for the purpose, an Origo alcohol stove, complete with fiddles designed for yacht use. The galley box was designed around it with an opening flap to get at the cooker control and a slot to the side for cutlery and mugs, etc. This has been very successful.

Astern of the galley and larder boxes are formed two opening sections in the bottom boards. Beneath here is the deepest part of *Avel Dro's* bilge and this was clearly the best place to add ballast. Ilurs are designed to take five adults, and during my initial sea trials of the boat I had found her to be seriously under-ballasted when sailed by one or two people, even with full camping gear on board.

Other dinghy sailors have added lead ballast to their boats, but I had a different idea. During my yacht sailing years I had learnt the benefit of all-chain anchor rodes and the security they give when anchoring overnight. Compared to a nylon warp, chain really settles down a boat at anchor, reducing the tendency to sheer about, and also self-stows when it is hauled in, without needing to flake it down. So one of the two lockers contains 30 metres of anchor chain, which serves as ballast when sailing, and this helps to keep the dinghy stuck solidly to the bottom when the anchor is down.

The other locker contains a 30-metre nylon warp for the kedge anchor, with five metres of chain between anchor and warp. Both my anchors are the same weight, 5kg (10lbs). The all-chain rode is shackled to a plough anchor, which is kept up in the bows, with the chain draped over the side of the bow thwart, leading aft to the chain locker. The kedge anchor is a fisherman's pattern which is folded down and lashed to the side of the centreboard case when out of use. The anchors can be swapped over from rode to rode if necessary, and for deeper water the

two rodes can be connected together. I also carry an additional 30-metre length of warp, as 90 metres of rode would be required if I ever had to spend a tide at anchor out in the full 15-metre range of the Bristol Channel, which is my home patch.

The two different types of anchor give me the ability to match the anchor to the type of bottom, the plough for mud, and the fisherman for rock or kelp. But this is an accident, as I already had both anchors. Were I to buy brand new anchors for a cruising dinghy, I would go for two fishermen's pattern anchors as I believe this is still the best pattern of anchor for all-round use, as long as it is heavy enough (it is no accident that they are used on RNLI lifeboats). It is particularly nice the way you can sail along with them hooked over the gunwale of the boat to wash the mud off.

Avel Dro came with built-in buoyancy to comply with French regulations, which means she will stay afloat with the weight of the whole five-man crew aboard, but I have added additional buoyancy in the form of two large fenders, lashed down on each side of the boat amidships. Although I carry smaller fenders, too, these big blighters can be brought out and used as fendering in stressful situations, when lying alongside rough stone quaysides or rusty fishing trawlers. They have proved to be well worth the space they take up.

Aft of the second rowing thwart we enter the saloon area of the boat, the plush officer's quarters. At night, two Thermarest mattresses are laid out on the bottom boards, extending forward under the thwart as far as the larder and galley boxes, to form the beds for the crew, but during the day this area is completely clear for the business of sailing. Under the side seats, which extend along both sides of this area, there is space for four waterproof bags of clothes and bedding, two for each member of the crew. These bags are lashed in place to act as additional buoyancy if the boat were to be swamped.

I decided to experiment with 12V power aboard *Avel Dro* so I could run an all-round masthead white light as an anchor or navigation light, keep a proper GPS going the whole time, as well as recharge handheld VHF sets, mobile phones, and run other electronic equipment. Power comes from a small Vetus 12V yacht battery which is contained in a third wooden box mounted immediately in front of the bow thwart. This box has a lid that clamps down onto a neoprene gasket so it would withstand a swamping without wiping out the electronics.

Initially I used to carry a battery charger to recharge the battery in the middle of a long trip, but I have found that there is ample power in the battery to keep *Avel Dro* going for over a fortnight. In any case, it is likely that I would be able to borrow a battery charger from whosoever was providing the socket to plug it in to.

The pace of electronic change is so rapid that *Avel Dro's* electrical gear has already been completely renewed once since it was first fitted, and much of it is probably out of date once again. The electronic gear presently carried is as follows:

- Garmin 128 fixed GPS
- ACR Rapidfix 406 EPIRB (interfaced to the fixed GPS)
- Icom M71 waterproof handheld VHF
- Standard Horizon HX500E waterproof handheld VHF
- Garmin 72 handheld GPS (as back up)
- All round white light with photocell can be hauled up the mast at night instead of the burgee

At any one time, one of the VHF sets is kept out ready for use while the other is kept in the battery case on charge. Each of the VHF's has its own charging holder in the battery case.

It would probably have been prudent to have test-sailed an Ilur setting a traditional Breton single lugsail before I went out and bought one, but this did not happen. So it was with a great deal of trepidation that I took the boat out for the first time. The sail is very large, equivalent to the full rig of a Wayfarer (12 square metres or 130 square feet). All the power is led to a single sheet with a two-part purchase. This is hooked onto one of the quarters at the stern and it has to be unhooked and taken across to the other quarter each time the boat is tacked. This process takes some getting used to, but at least going about is a fairly leisurely process. Gybing, by contrast, is much more frantic. I have only a split second to pass the sheet across before the sail fills with wind and rips the sheet out of my hand.

It would be possible to modify the rig by fitting a horse to the sheet, but this would have numerous knock-on effects on the boat, including the necessity for a completely new rudder arrangement, and generally add a lot of complexity to what is at present admirably robust and simple set-up. Amazingly, there are only three pieces of rigging on the boat, no shackles whatsoever and only three blocks, two of which are on the tack downhaul. Before altering the rig from Francois Vivier's original design, I was determined to see if I could get used to sailing it as it was.

It was months before I could tack the boat with confidence and nearly a year before I had learnt to gybe her. But I now find a great deal of pleasure in getting the best out of the boat and take a particular pride in gybing her smartly; sheeting the sail in tight, bringing the rudder over, waiting for the pressure on the sheet to drop as the sail begins to feather into the wind, then rapidly unhooking the sheet and flicking it quickly across onto the wooden hook on the other quarter, and paying it out at the run as the sail suddenly fills with wind.

Although I have got very fond of the rig, I am not sure I would recommend it to someone else. It would not suit everyone. Its great advantage is its robust simplicity and efficiency. If not as close-winded as a decent Bermudan dinghy (a well-set-


up Wayfarer will walk away from *Avel Dro* to windward), the rig is surprisingly efficient and *Avel Dro* can keep pace with most DCA-type boats. The sail cannot be reefed when hoisted though. It has to be lowered into the boat, the reef points tied down, and then re-hoisted, and this requires a reasonable amount of sea room to leeward while I tie down all the reef knots. But this type of traditional reefing means that the sail always sets well (as long as I reefed it neatly) and the efficiency of a well-set lugsail often surprises onlookers. On a reach *Avel Dro* leaves most boats standing (including Wayfarers). Another advantage of the rig is the way that the lowered sail can be cleared right out of the way, leaving the whole of the boat clear for other business.

One of the nicest things about the boat is how easy she is to propel with a single oar over the stem, "a la godille" as the French would say. Indeed I tend to sail with an oar permanently in the sculling notch in the transom, its blade sticking out over the stern so the oar is constantly ready for use. Only if I need to propel the boat a good distance is it worth clearing out the other oar and sitting down to row conventionally.

So all in all, I am very happy with my choice of dinghy and the way that the boat is now set up. There is always a list of jobs to do on any boat, of course, and improvements to be made, but *Avel Dro* has already proved a good and trusted friend in a number of sticky situations and I know that I can rely on her. I am not planning to change her for anything else at the moment, not even another yacht.—RB



Avel Dro at Ile Molene.



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I particularly enjoyed your "Commentary" in the November issue contrasting the schooner yacht *Bluenose II* to the working fishing schooners of the past, since in late September my wife and I visited Lunenburg, Nova Scotia, where we enjoyed a three-hour sail on *Bluenose II*. It was a glorious day, wind about 28 knots and we had a brisk sail under reefed main, fore, and two jibs. It was splendid.

I am from Michigan and the inland seas, the Great Lakes. If you are not familiar with the Maritime Heritage Alliance in Traverse City, you should be (www.mhatc.net.) I would like to acquaint you and your readers with their *Madeline*, a 92' (spared length) Great Lakes Schooner. Built by the volunteers of MHA 1985-1990, she is a replica of another *Madeline* originally built in Ohio in the 1840s. The *Madeline*, with nearly two thousand other similar vessels, were the workhorse transport carriers of the day carrying everything, lumber, fish, salt, bricks, stones, bark, and even Christmas trees.

The modern day *Madeline* was constructed and is operated like the original, save the diesel engine. No electric winches, no electric windlass, and no digital electronic wind indicators. *Madeline* spends her summers visiting various ports educating about Great Lakes schooners and their importance in the development of the Midwest.

Welcome Aboard The Schooner Madeline

Madeline is a reconstruction of a mid-19th century fore and aft schooner built by the Maritime Heritage Alliance, a non-profit organization based in Traverse City, Michigan.

The original *Madeline* sailed the waters of Lake Michigan more than 150 years ago. During the winter of 1850-51 her cargo hold became the first non-native school in the Grand Traverse region.

Meet Madeline

By David L. Smith



Like her namesake, today's *Madeline* has served education since her first frames were lofted in 1985. During the five-year building project hundreds of volunteers learned boat building skills using both traditional and modern methods.

Since *Madeline* was launched in 1990, the MHA has maintained her as a dockside interpretive center allowing thousands of visitors to come aboard and learn about Great Lakes maritime history and traditional sailing craft.

When under sail *Madeline* becomes a training ship for her crew and a goodwill ambassador representing Traverse City and the Grand Traverse region throughout the Great Lakes.

The members of the Maritime Heritage Alliance invite you to explore *Madeline* from stem to stern. Our volunteer tour guides and crew welcome your questions.

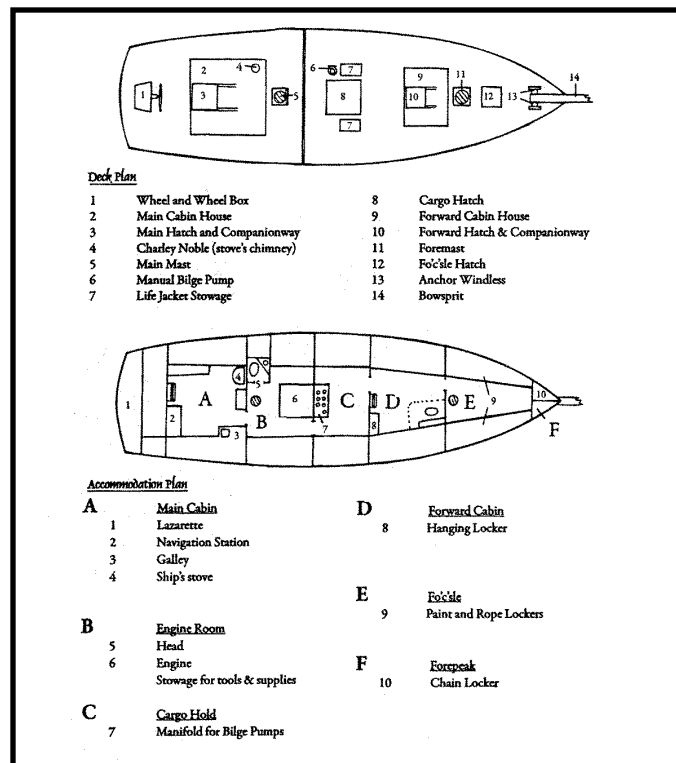
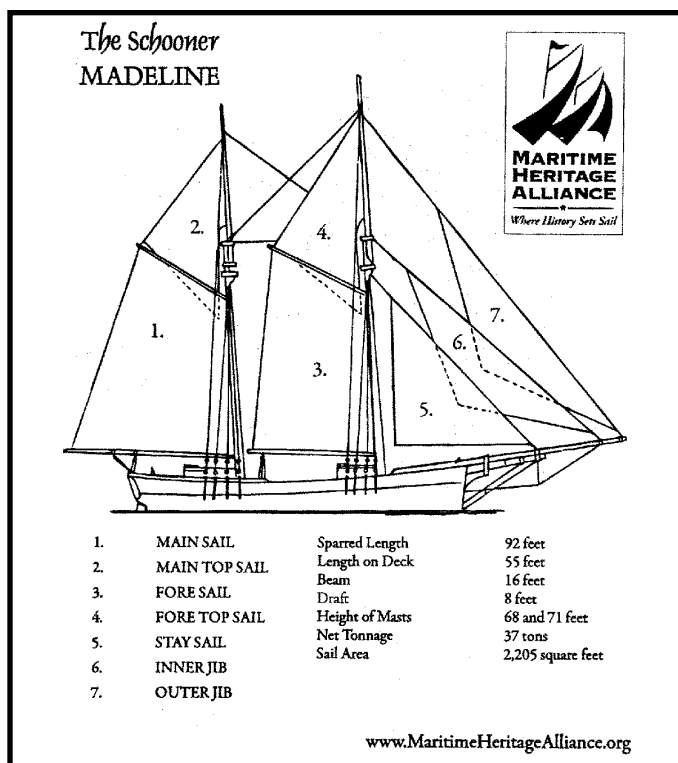
About Madeline

The original *Madeline* was built in Fairport, Ohio, in 1845 as a freight-carrying schooner. She carried barrels of fish from Mackinac Island and other commodities to and from ports on upper Lake Michigan.

Since little is known about the construction of the first *Madeline*, the MHA's reconstruction is based on other 19th century schooners of the same size and period. Today's schooner was built using both traditional and modern materials and technology. She complies with current Coast Guard safety regulations.

Madeline was built of traditional boat building woods native to northern Michigan. The keelson is 50'x11"x11" white oak. Strong and naturally rot resistant, oak was and is a common and preferred boat building material. The planking and deck are 2½" native pine, pressure-treated to ensure the boat's longevity. The spars (mast, gaffs, booms, and bowsprit) were shaped from local white pine timbers. The hand-built blocks and deadeyes are made of osage orange.

Aloft, *Madeline's* rig is that of a two-masted fore and aft schooner, some call her a topsail schooner. Traditionally, sails were made of tanbark-treated cotton canvas. Today's *Madeline* has sails sewn from dacron fabric which is more durable. Likewise her lines are made of modern fibers; dacron and nylon instead of traditional hemp, a natural fiber. Her shrouds and forestays are made of steel cable, an innovation of the 19th century.



Down in Texas they started a “cruise,” not really a race, 200 miles up the protected waters of the intercoastal waterway. They say the wind blows strong and from such a direction that you reach or run the whole way and usually in smooth water. The area is pretty unpopulated and in the several days it takes to make the run you must be self sufficient, including taking all your food and water needed.

Chuck Leinweber wanted to build a boat for the event and started with a look at Raider. Raider was also made for a “race,” but in the Baltic where the wind is not nearly so reliable, thus it was also meant to row well. The Raider crew always bunks on shore, in splendor, so carrying gear in the boat is not really required.

The Texas boat was to have a crew of two and it would best if those two could sleep on the floor of the boat, although storage would be needed for a tent also, plus all the rest for several days including a few hundred pounds of fresh water. So it would have to be different from Raider. No need for that somewhat elaborate V-bottomed shape either, since it was expected to be max hull speed reaching and running in smooth water. So a flat bottom was fine. Chuck also suggested the simplest possible construction, maybe even be able to build it onsite in the days before the race.

I doodled some doodles and decided to try a lengthened version of Mayfly16, the prototype shown here by Tom Fulk.



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Laguna Sailboat

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By Jim Michalak

If you're gonna lengthen it, might as well add 8' or so, the length of a plywood panel. I was asked to keep the bottom narrow enough to plank over with a single width of plywood, 4', like Mayfly16. The sail rig was also to be kept simple and need not be large given the usual strength of the wind there.

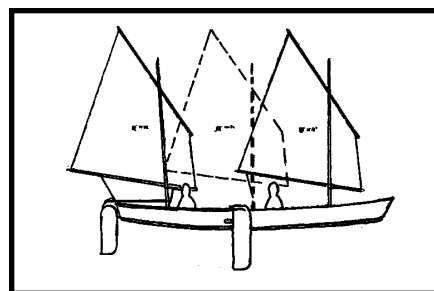
The two sails and masts are the same as my Ladybug rig, something Chuck already has on hand, at least one of them anyway. Then there is a plan to have the ability to mount a solo mast in the boat's center.

So, in general we have a long, skinny, flat-bottomed sailing skiff of the simplest sort of construction. There are two cockpits so the sailors can sulk and mope apart from one another on the long trip, no need for mutiny or worse. The cockpits are each 6.5' long so sleeping on the floor is possible. There are storage/buoyancy chambers fore and aft. They should help a lot in a knockdown but a boat with 13' of open cockpit can swallow a huge amount of water in a knockdown. One thing that might help a lot in such a situation is to tie large air-filled fenders outside of the top wale to give the narrow boat broader shoulders to lift it when it goes over sideways.

At first I gave it long bench seats like Mayfly16's, but on second thought I changed to individual seats that cross the backs of the cockpits. On a trip this long you must be comfortable. These should be quickly removable to allow clearing for the sleeping spot. The bench seats simply can't allow a center aisle wide enough for sleeping. I might add that if the boat were used on occasion to take out a very numerous crew, say a family reunion, then I would suggest leaving the seats on shore and have all sit on the floor. Then again, if you are never to sleep in the boat you might install the bench seats, which can be somewhat complicated but usually provide the best comfort. I drew up the expanded panels and made a card model that looked like this.

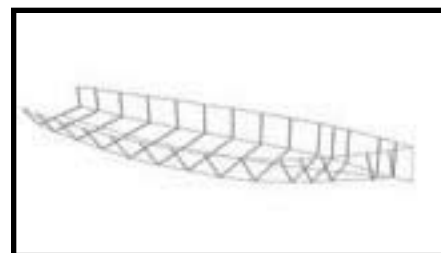


Its stern has my usual open well with a place for a small motor. I drew up the sail rig in more detail and got this.



No real change here from the original cartoon but I've shown the single mast set-up in dashed lines. The tiller of such a boat always bothered me. The masts are on centerline. The tiller has to end short of the mast, of course, to allow it to swing. So the skipper has to hand it back and forth to himself, sometimes on tacks. I think what I show is the best approach, or at least the simplest. Any other rig would require some linkage or perhaps a large, oddball tiller. This should work OK given the long stretches with no tacks required in the race.

About this time, with the design pretty much set, I made up a Hullform model which looked like this.



The program doesn't seem to allow slanted stems and transoms so it isn't exactly per the drawing. These are very good at scoping out displacement, although with such a simple design you can do OK with a quick hand calc. For example here, if the boat were loaded down to where its stem hits the water, what I would call the maximum displacement (although the boat could clearly take a lot more weight with ugly flow lines), then the waterline length would be about 21'.

The maximum submerged cross section would be about 7"x48" in area (draft times beam) which is 336sq in, which is 2.33sf. So a "prizm" 21'x2.33' would have a volume of 49cf. Boats like this almost always have a "prismatic coefficient" of about .55, so I would expect the real boat to have a displaced volume, at 7" draft of .55x49 which equals 27cf of water. Water weighs about 63lbs/cf so that displacement amounts to 1,700lbs. The Hullform model predicts 2,000lbs displacement at 7" draft so perhaps the difference is partly because the side flare gives a bit more displacement and perhaps the hull is fuller in the ends than the norm. I think the higher coefficient is good in smooth water.

At this stage I could start a layout of the plywood panels. No need to make this boat heavy so I would call for a bottom of 1/2" plywood and maybe 1/4" plywood for all else, although some of you can't stand on a 1/4" ply deck. The total on first cut looks to be nine sheets of 1/4" and five sheets of 1/2". Usually 1/4" sheets weigh 25lbs and 1/2" sheets weigh 50lbs, so the grand total would be 475lbs. I would expect the completed hull to weigh about that. So the boat will have a lot of capacity for the trip.

Chuck suggested that maybe several of these might "nest" together on a trailer. I don't see how any boats can nest together if they have any sort of deck structure. You might be able to stack two of these on a special trailer, as I have seen racing sailboats like Y Flyers stacked. But how are you gonna unstack 500lb hulls without a lot of... SO THERE YOU HAVE IT ...help? But it could be done.

The Bahama Sharpshooters

By John W. Cooper

One of the great joys in life is to have friends like my friend Joseph Brown, who is aware of my interest in things nautical and naval. Recently he was at an estate sale and spotted a pristine first edition copy of *American Sailing Craft* by Howard I. Chapelle. He waited until the end of the day and was able to buy this beautiful volume for a song. He just gave me the book.

Sailing Craft is THE reference for the design of many classic small work craft such as the New Haven Sharpie (made famous by many generations of Phil Bolger's designs), Chesapeake Bay Skipjack, Cape Cod Catboat, Bermuda Sloops and Dinghies, and Maine's Friendship Sloop. Designs that Chapelle believed would make fine yachts.

One type of boat that Chapelle discusses in the book that isn't mentioned much is the Bahama Sharpshooter as a catboat. Over the years several fine naval architects have tried to "improve" Sharpshooter. Generally they have designed shallow draft boats. But the lower draft removes a key advantage of the original boat, its deep draft. To make their design work, they have to add a jib. The Sharpshooter cat, as it was designed, merits more interest by those who want a classic boat.

Sharpshooter is a good-looking boat in a rakish way. "We were schooner-rigged and rakish, with a long and lissome hull" (John Masfield). Phil Bolger was wont to say that beautiful boats should receive tax credits because they enhance the view. With her graceful sheer, raked bow, even greater raked stern, and perfectly raked and tapered mast, I believe she meets his criteria.

In the chapter on Sharpshooters is a sketch of one under sail and line drawings of an actual boat and a similar-sized proposed yacht measuring 24'6" on deck, beam 9', draft 4'-8". They show her rakish way.

All this in a seaworthy and easily handled catboat with a simple leg-of-mutton sail. It has the single sail advantages of a Cape Cod Catboat but can also take a knockdown and sail better off the wind.

In the chapter's text Chapelle states, "The only objection to the keel catboat is the difficulty of getting it out of irons without a knockdown which, though not dangerous, is disconcerting. If a centerboard cat inadvertently gets into irons, two courses are open to get her out; if the wind is light the helm is put over and the boat allowed to gather sternway so that she comes around on her helm. In a strong breeze, however, this is followed by a knockdown. This maneuver is what must be carried out in a keel cat. In the centerboarder, however, it is better to raise the board and let her swing around on her skeg, taking care to handle the main sheet at the same time and so avoid a knockdown. Obviously, a knockdown in a well-ballasted keel cat is not as potentially dangerous as in a centerboarder."

This is why it is important to keep the deep keel of a Sharpshooter cat as designed. With much of her underwater lateral plane centered well aft, she will easily swing around on her keel. Another aspect of the design is the use of a loose footed leg-of-mutton sail that can be quickly "scandalized" to reduce sail area in a knockdown. If you follow Chapelle's "recipe" you can have a seagoing catboat.

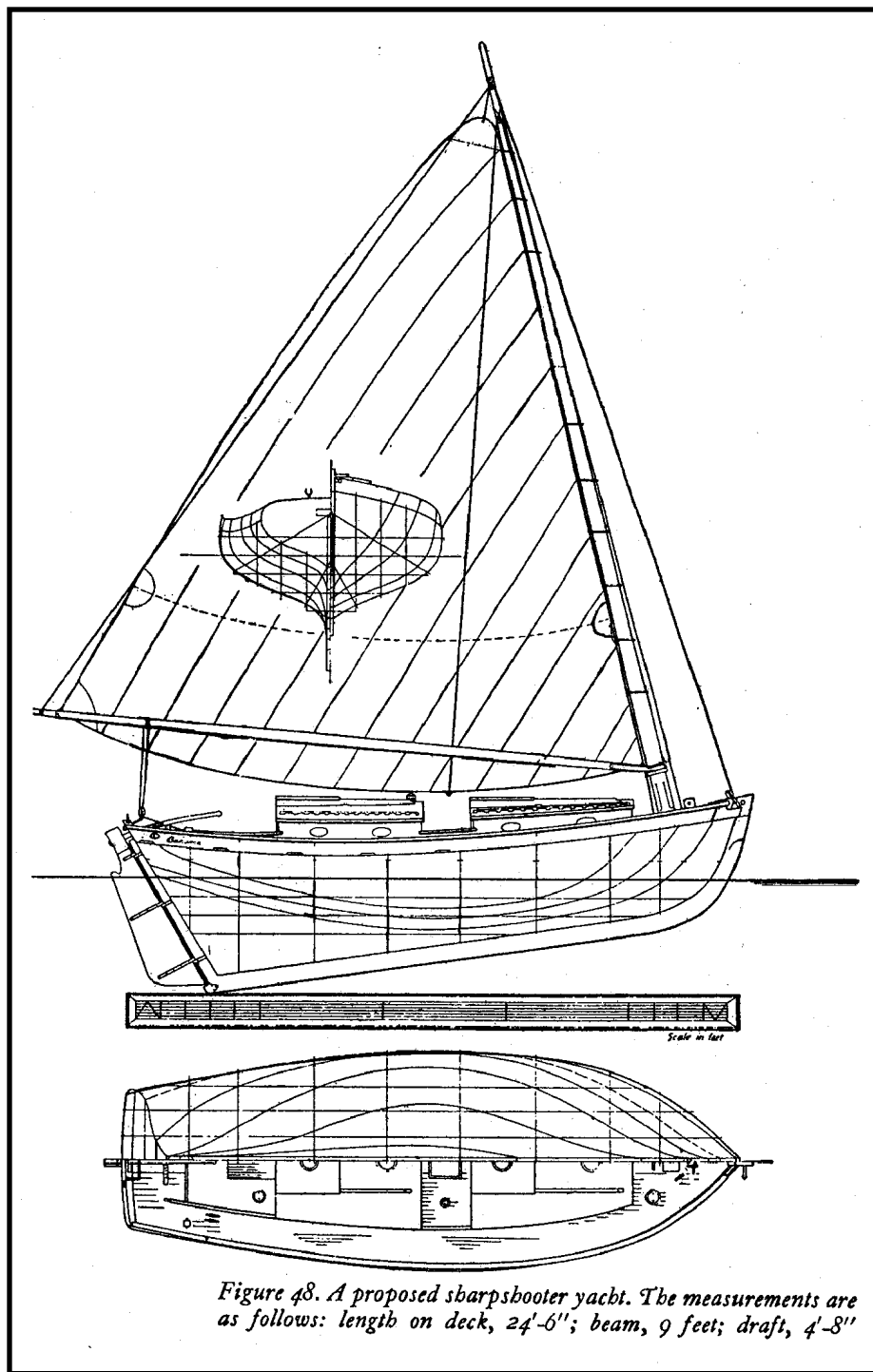


Figure 48. A proposed sharpshooter yacht. The measurements are as follows: length on deck, 24'-6"; beam, 9 feet; draft, 4'-8"

If, before tacking, the helmsman lets the boat fall off a bit and build up some speed, she will forge ahead through the eye of the wind onto the other tack without getting into irons. With a mass of around four tons and low windage mast and hull, Sharpshooter has the muscle.

The downside of a Sharpshooter is that it does, indeed, have a deep draft. It is not a boat for our Texas Gulf Coast, but would be a fine boat for our deep Canyon Lake near San Antonio. But for many popular sailing areas, shallows are not a serious problem, particularly in our age of GPS, depth sounders, and auxiliary engines.

Another upside to great draft is that she can have a tall narrow rudder with a small moment tiller arm, rather than a shallow wide rudder with large moment arm and the

heavy steering characteristic of classic shallow draft cats.

If getting stuck in irons is still a concern, a "Green" cat with electric propulsion might be the answer. Then all one needs to do is throw a switch and power through the tack. Better yet, do it before tacking and never lose headway.

Chapelle designed her for inside ballast, so she is a natural for a "lead mine" of storage batteries placed deep in her hull. They could be charged up in a marina slip, at anchor using a wind generator and solar panels, or for long periods of motoring by having a small diesel generator tucked away aft of the cockpit. Diesel-electric-sailocomotion!

Let me know when a Sharpshooter catboat is to be launched and I'll provide the Texas bubbly for her christening!



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1929 Atlantic One Design Sloop

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I purchased this sloop back in 1997 from a man named Cross down in Rhode Island. It was headed for scrap at that time. I bought it on my birthday, December 31, for \$3,500, which was all the money I had. I had it moved to Brownell Boatyard in Mattapoisett, Massachusetts, where I kept it for three years and worked on it on the weekends. I was living on Nantucket at the time and working as a carpenter. In 2000 I had it in the water for a week after working on the hull with my father-in-law. She swelled up nicely and stayed in the harbor for a week. The seepage stopped within three hours and the battery was fresh at the end of a week.

Then I moved it to my home in Centerville on Cape Cod. I had a man from Maine living briefly in the neighborhood and he was helping me begin to restore it a little at a time. Against my specific direction, he went ahead and disassembled much of it and then moved on.

My hopes of restoring the sloop at this time are not positive so I would like to give it to someone who can do that. The boat had belonged to a man in Connecticut where he had raced it, I believe, out of Cedar Point Yacht Club in Westport. I actually spoke to a man named Olsen who had known the previous owner and had raced on her. By his account, she was very fast and handled well in weather. He assured me that it was a wet ride.

I am a bit of an amateur historian interested in the Wompanoag tribe. It is their custom to change their name at the onset of any

great event or occasion. Massasoit, when deciding to go and do battle against the Pequod, a rival tribe along the shore of Connecticut, changed his name from Massasoit to Oosamequin (Yellow Feather). He was called this name at the time of his death. And so I named the sloop *Oosamequin*, hoping to return to the shores of Connecticut (the Atlantic coast headquarters of the Fiberglass Atlantic One Design fleet) to do battle with the Pequod once more.

At one point, I acquired another boom and another set of sails for it from an Atlantic that was being scrapped so it has two sets of sails that I believe are in good shape. Two booms are in serviceable condition. The mast is in fair shape and has all the hardware attached and could be rejuvenated. All the stainless steel rigging and stays are here as well and six new stainless steel stay moorings that attach below the deck along the ribs amidships. These I had made up in Kingston, Massachusetts, at a custom metal fabricator and they are of super high grade SS. All the other fittings and such are present.

The hull is mahogany and the ribs are made of laminated oak. I have a set of plans from Mystic Seaport that show everything. I also have an extensive file on her with photographs showing the original location and look of everything on deck and elsewhere that I will obviously give with the sloop. As far as I know she was built in Lemwerder, Germany, and I do know that she is #74 and was built in 1929. Apparently no documentation of this last part is obtainable because the shipyard was destroyed during WWII.

I think the sloop is restorable and I know it will take a lot of work. I will tell you in all honesty, if I had the money and the time I would still do this project as I'm completely sure this racer would be unbelievable to sail. According to Joe Olsen, she loved big wind! I sincerely hope we can find somebody to take her. She still has a nice shape and I only noticed a little bit of hogging aft on the port side, but an oldtimer told me often this will come right out once she's in the water. I am offering her for FREE.

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Long before the days of boat trailers and marinas, many small boats were stored on and launched from the local beach or strand. In many places around the world this is still the practice, and here in the US the popularity of beach launching small boats is on the rise. The popularity of beach boats like sailboards, Sunfish, and small catamarans contributed heavily to this condition, but more and more we are also seeing conventional type centerboarders there, too, like Lasers, Snipes, Blue Jays, and even Lightnings.

There are several reasons for this. Basically it is faster and cheaper than leaving your small boat at a marina dock or mooring. For the sailor with little recreational time to waste, it means not having to spend precious time getting to or from an upriver marina or anchorage to get started on a short after work or weekend sail.

It certainly beats trying to keep up with the spiraling costs of renting boat space, whether your boat is on a mooring or in a marina. Sailors have also been cruising a lot more in small boats lately and, rather than stay for a night or two in a marina, they prefer instead to pull their boat up on a quiet beach. They not only avoid paying the cost of a slip for the night, but also they avoid the noise and confusion that goes along with such a location. There's no greater enjoyment for many small boat skippers than to sail into one of the many shallow bays and inlets where bigger boats can't go and enjoy the peace and solitude of one of these isolated areas.

Generally speaking, your boat is as safe if not safer on a beach than on a mooring. You don't have to worry about whether your boat's mooring or anchor line will hold when a storm with high winds hits.

However, sailing from a beach isn't desirable or available to everyone. Aside from personal preference, there are certain conditions that must exist in order for sailors to successfully store or launch their boats there. The size and type of sailboat is obviously one of them. A shoal draft, centerboarder, or leeboarder with a kick-up rudder is the ideal boat for this kind of activity. She should be light enough for one or two persons to pull up on the beach or launch regardless of the method used. A boat with a kick-up rudder (or one that can be readily shipped) also is desirable in order to leave or approach the shore under sail without grounding (paddling or rowing is not always practical).

There are also certain minimal physical conditions that the beach or shoreline should meet before you can safely launch or store on it. The ideal location is one that is free from obstructions, both submerged and floating. Rocks, partially covered at times of high water, must be located and charted to avoid a sudden disastrous grounding. It is also preferable to select a windward shore (to the prevailing winds of the local area) and to have a wide sweep of beach from which to launch, preferably half-moon in shape. It should not be located on a channel or busy waterway if you can help it. A sandy bottom is probably best. Understandably, all these conditions cannot always be met, but the closer you get to the ideal, the better.

Equipment

The equipment you should have in order to launch from a beach or shore depends upon the conditions discussed above: the type of boat, the kind of launching area, and the existing wind and current conditions. An

A Lifetime on the Water

Part 16

Beach Launching Made Easy

By Lionel Taylor

easy method for launching on sand or gravel is to roll your vessel up and down the beach on boat fenders. This is especially acceptable if you're cruising in your boat where the plastic fenders can serve a dual purpose,

On my 11' sailboat I tie two 20" long fenders together and place them under the boat in a line athwartship. The two fenders, fully extended on their lines, stretch out to 48" of the boat's maximum beam of 50". I can single-handedly launch and retrieve my 150-175lb boat on the steepest of shores with surprisingly little effort using this method.

Probably the best way to launch from a sandy or shingle beach, however, especially on a long term basis, is with a boat dolly. I am sure you have seen several types in your local marine store, a pair of wheels mounted on a frame that clamp to the transom or the type that fits into the daggerboard well of a Sailfish or Sunfish. The trouble with some of those special purpose dollies is that their tires can be too small, narrow, and hard for a soft sand or muddy beach. The weight of the boat causes the wheels to sink in and you work almost as hard moving the boat on the wheels as you would if you had to drag it to and from the water.

Some marine hardware manufacturers, however, have capitalized on this flaw and are selling dollies with large, wide, inflatable tires that work well in sand. In the case of the Sunfish, they have stayed with the through-the-daggerboard-well concept, but with the other kind of beach boats they came up with new ideas. The dolly for the Hobie Cat, for example, utilizes a four-wheel frame with two of the wheels outboard of the hulls to keep the boat uptight and two larger wheels closer to the centerline to carry and support the boat's weight. A minimum of two people are needed to launch and beach these catamarans with this rig.

The Laser frequently uses a dolly with two large wheels located just outboard of the boat's maximum beam. The hull itself rests on a padded axle beam and the dolly comes equipped with a metal pull bar.

Of course, there are almost as many different do-it-yourself designs as those that are sold commercially. This is especially true if the terrain differs markedly from that for which the commercial dollies are sold. One small boat builder in Michigan, for example, because he launches from a grassy strand, made his own boat dolly for an 18' pulling boat out of wood that utilizes two 28" bicycle wheels.

Beach-Side Seamanship

When sailing your boat off of a beach, try to do so at a time when conditions are as ideal as possible. If this is your first time, go in the

morning when breezes tend to be lighter and the chance of a thunderstorm or squall is less.

Let us assume that you have a small 12' to 15' long sloop with a centerboard and kick-up rudder that you want to sail off of a small, curved beach. If you are making an upwind start (the wind onshore), walk your boat to the most windward end of the beach to give yourself as much sea room as possible. With a sufficient depth of water off your stern, you can ship your rudder with the blade in the tipped-up position.

Stand just to windward of your boat with the bow into the wind and the sails hoisted and luffing. Lower your centerboard to match the depth of your kick-up rudder. With one foot over the side and into the boat, push off with the other, your mainsail now close-hauled to the wind.

The principle thought to keep uppermost in your mind when first climbing aboard your boat is to get her and keep her footing, even if it means falling off from a close-hauled course for a short time. Don't succumb to the temptation of pinching your boat as it will only produce a heeling moment that will result, in the end, in your being back on the beach again. When you attain boat speed, you can then put her back on the wind.

Once you have gotten into deeper water, start lowering your centerboard or daggerboard to compensate for your leeward drift. This is especially important if there is a strong wind and current. Sail trim is important. A flat jib will cause your bow to fall off the wind and in toward the beach, while a flat mainsail will tend to turn your bow into the wind and away from the shore. While underway, keep an eye out for partially submerged rocks and other boats that my suddenly appear on the scene. Tack only when you feel you're clear of the beach.

A downwind or reaching start, in comparison to a windward one, is much easier. In all but a light wind, you can leave your sails down or go with your jib until you're clear of the beach. Having a sufficient depth of water for your rudder to function is your main consideration.

Returning to shore after a day on the water presents the same problems as setting out, only in reverse. The windward approach can be as difficult as the windward take-off, especially if the shoreline is strange to you and you're coming ashore in the dusk and with a rising wind.

If the area is new to you, take your time and scout about first. Check your chart and observe the obstructions and currents around your proposed landing spot. Once you've made up your mind, begin your approach at the windward end of the beach because, as you get closer to shore, you must start to raise your centerboard and rudder blade to avoid going aground. The sideways drift that this action creates can only be compensated for by allowing yourself sufficient sea room in which to maneuver.

In making a downwind approach, you can almost sail your boat right up on the sand if the beach is steep enough and there are no obstructions.

Above all, if conditions are too severe, don't be afraid to lay offshore for a while or put off a launch and try again later. This is far better in the end than a fun-ending capsizing, grounding, or collision.

It started out innocently enough. I was telling a friend about this trip I wanted to take. I wanted to sort of circle the country towing a small boat. You know, stopping along the way to sail and camp out, then move on to another place. Sort of a Route 66 by water. He said, innocently enough, "I have a boat that just might do what you want to do. And so started yet another "project." Actually, it's been more like the birth of a child, most of the work comes later.

Enter *Lady Bug*. At 16', sitting on a single axle trailer, she looked pretty "manageable." Original cushions, original sails, unmodified factory rig, and an un-running long shaft 4hp Johnson. That was almost three years ago. That was also three tow vehicles ago, unrecorded thousands of dollars, and unrecorded thousands of man hours ago. Of course, I went into this project with some ideas how I could "make it better." OK. I have messed with EVERYTHING. Some things are on their third or fourth iteration. About the only thing I haven't seen a need to improve, modify, adjust, or replace so far is the hull color. And, now that I think about it, the hull really does need painting. That red gel coat just won't rub out any more.

I admit it. I just don't have the patience to build a boat from scratch. After all, why build the exact boat you want when you can rebuild somebody else's ideas several times over? Actually, it's not so much a lack of patience, as an abundance of ideas that precludes a single "best design." I'll bet you know somebody like that.

The boat's mission profile has ebbed and flowed a bit since that first blush of enthusiasm. I have often felt guilty of stuffing 10lbs into a 3lb sack. I have even threatened to cut the cabin off and turn that perky little hull into a mini tug on more than several occasions. Every time I bump my head or elbow in that little cabin, I think dark thoughts about starting over with a 20-footer. But, the project continues. And, continues.

As a somewhat reluctant recent addition to the ranks of senior citizens I have done what I can to make things work so I can avoid pushing and shoving the hull off and onto the trailer. The mast must be raised and lowered without drama, additional helping hands and shoulders, and both while the boat is afloat and ashore. The cabin must support the essentials of a portapot, galley, comfortable berth, and power-nap recliner. And, she has to be the fastest damn sailboat on the pond. Of course.

Rigged and ready for the next adventure. New taller mast sticks out of both ends more, orange streamer also stays on as masthead apparent wind indicator. Tool box since lowered to allow easier access when boat on trailer. Spare tire since bolted to trailer bed and spare motor since mounted where tool box used to be. So many holes still left to drill.



Boats Really Don't Make Sense

So Little Time... So Many Holes to Drill The Process of Simplifying and Adding Lightness

By Dan Rogers

This little girl had good bones to start with. I don't know who drew the lines, but she's a Balboa 16 by Laguna Yachts, about 25 years old, and originally sold in Phoenix, AZ. She displaces over 1,500lbs empty. The total towing weight comes in at 3,000lbs. Yes, on a single axle trailer without trailer brakes, originally. The mast that came with the boat is the same section as those on bigger sister Laguna 27. The rigging wire and stainless hardware is the same as well. They simply cut the pole off at 19', stuck on a full complement of uppers, lowers, spreaders, fore 'n aft stays, and a substantial boom section. There were enough wires coiled up around that stick to protect a dug-in infantry company.

The rudder is solid mahogany and stands 5' high. The original companionway hatch was heat-formed 1/2" acrylic with teak trim. There was a 3"x3" solid mahogany compression post smack dab in the middle of the cabin and, of course, real chain plates bolted through the hull. In many ways, this boat was overbuilt. In fact, the cockpit is completely unsupported from gun'l to gun'l, and I have yet to feel it flex. As they say, "hell for stout."

Tow vehicles have been a bit of a challenge. I have this aging little Isuzu Amigo, 5-speed, with a simple little four banger under the hood. I was pretty sure that was all I was going to need to pull a 16' boat. And on flat ground that's pretty much true, but, the clutch slips trying to pull the boat up a launch ramp. Trying to scale mountain passes over 2,000' is pretty much out of the question. Well, you see this isn't all that simple to work out. I was still planning to circle the country single-handed. But, being a happily married man required me to plan this trip in stages.

I was going to leave truck, boat and trailer in this or that storage lot around the country until the next phase of the trip got clearance from the War Department. Once again, you may know somebody like that. So, leaving something new, and expensive, for months or longer, thousands of miles away from home, didn't really compute.

The original idea was to tow the boat as a sort of camper. That way, I could live in the boat both on the trailer and at anchor or dockside along the way. A year into the project, I heard about this '77 Caprice with only 60,000 miles on it. I got it for less than \$500. Problem was, the car was in a snowdrift south of Spokane, WA. *Lady Bug* was still in San Diego. Actually, the drive south gave me a chance to look at lakes and launching ramps from eastern Washington all the way home. A 2,000-mile drive with only the original equipment AM radio for companionship does leave a bit to be desired unless you are more interested in right-wing talk radio than I am.

I dubbed that car the "Lead Sled." I installed a frame-mounted hitch, chased various electrical gremlins, and replaced things that wear out on a car even if it hasn't been driven much. This brought the investment to several times the original purchase price. But, even so, that old Chevy was probably still something that I could leave unattended at odd parts of the country without much concern. Unfortunately, a rather anemic 305 engine and squishy suspension just didn't do justice to pulling a stocky little boat that stands over 7' from pavement-to-bow pulpit when on the trailer. Anyhow, when the car resolutely refused to pass a California smog inspection, it went directly to Craigslist. The kid that bought it was transfixed by a "radio with buttons." That, and those acres of powder blue upholstery had him peeling off hundreds, without even a test drive. Time for something bigger.

Current tow vehicle is just about ideal. That is, except when gas was nudging \$5 last summer. His name is "Big Ole," and he's a '92 Chevy half-ton van. I'm still building the camper set up inside. New ideas have a way of making you start over. Ever notice that? But, after I got that friendly-as-a-guestroom-hideabed rear seat out and replaced it with a real live thrift store recliner things were pretty well configured for a single male traveler. Ole is set up for electric trailer brakes. Loaded with about 1,000lbs of tools, spares, food, water, and camping gear; he has towed *Lady*

On the road to Texas 200, someplace in the Southern Arizona desert. Van has bed, desk, "crash wall" tool and can goods storage, and household recliner chair in back. Right rear tire completely disintegrated the next day under heavy load on hot Texas highway.



Bug up and down 6,000' passes with little effort. It's the coming DOWN mountains without auxiliary brakes mounted on the trailer that caused me the most apprehension on our first couple outings. More on that later.

I'm not certain how much the trailer weighs lately, with all the modifications and "improvements" I have added. And, the boat has been steadily adding pounds in much the same manner these several years, as well. But our gross vehicle weight is dangerously close to 10,000lbs when loaded for a road trip. That's an admittedly big carbon footprint for one who considers himself a messer. In balance, I have created a fairly capable road rig and seaworthy vessel that isn't physically demanding or dangerous to rig, launch, and sail.

I've been around boats my entire life. Most people seem to buy what's available, either new or used. If it doesn't work as advertised, they seem to either get another one or just not use the one they have. That's not only sad, it's unnecessary. With Bob Hicks' connivance and editing prowess, I'm gonna show what I have done to make this particular boat more user friendly. Not just to brag and show off my inventions, although we ALL like to do that, now don't we? No, I'd like to show how anybody can take a stock standard factory production boat and make it easier to use, and more versatile at the same time.

Let's start with the rig. Go to any launching ramp, and after you've been amply amused with the antics of the assorted weekend warriors attempting to launch and recover their metal flake and horsepower encumbered steeds take a look at the family over there in the corner attempting to raise the mast and rig the "business end" of their trailerable sailboat.

For those of us who are graduates of one of the various boot camps and basic training establishments, it's easy to recount in fractions of seconds just how long it's possible to hold an M-1 rifle at arm's length. Not very long. In fact, simply attempting to slowly raise a long handled broom from the horizontal is quite a trial for most of us. Attempting to raise 25' of aluminum tubing with wires and fittings hanging from it starts out easy. About halfway up it gets real hard. And, just when you are reenacting the flag scene from Iwo Jima, that mast can be almost impossible to strong arm into place all by yourself, mostly because there just isn't anyplace to stand, or the climb up onto the cabin top from the cockpit is just toooooo far to step.

This may be why these boats are sold as "family cruisers." It takes a whole village to push that pole into place. Then, you have to remember who has the clevis pin for the forestay in their pocket. It can be plum dangerous to stand a half story in the air over a concrete parking lot, pushing a mast into place. You are often looking up, while your feet skirt the edges of an open hatch, or narrow side deck. Sailing is supposed to be fun.

I think any trailerable sailboat should be able to be rigged by one person. Not because I don't want to share, but if you can't take the boat out by yourself, you won't take her out near as often. That's a fact. To do that, you need a way to control the mast from slewing off to the side, and from falling back down when you go forward to hook the rig up. I find it really nice to be able to motor *Lady Bug* around with the mast stowed, and to be able to drop the rig before hauling out with the trailer, even when I'm rolling in the wakes from those metal flake boys. It's also

nice to be able to stand up in the cockpit without smacking my head on the stowed mast and boom. And, at the top of the list is safety from being garroted by the loop of a tensioning shroud, and from being in the fall line of a, heaven forbid, falling mast. It's also a plus to be able to stop part of the way up and clear a fouled halyard, shroud, topping lift, mast carrier, or life line without needing to hold something heavy over your head.

I was sick the day they taught engineering, and the postulates and theorems that "explain" geometry have always terrorized me. So, a lot of my solutions to this mast raising thing have been trial and catastrophe. I have attempted to make most elements of the standing rig perform a second function in the mast raising scheme as well. Also, I use movable purchases and other parts of the running rig (such as gybe preventers, main sheet fiddle block, forestay tensioner, etc.) to secure the spars for trailering. My poor man's autopilot even gets in the act.

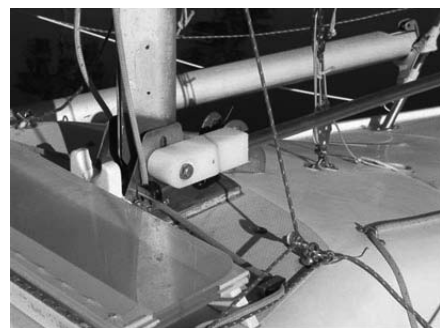
It's nice to be able to fabricate needed parts with basic shop tools and readily available materials. I use a lot of that UV stabilized high-density polyethylene. I can cut it with a table saw/band saw, shape it on a sander or router table, and bore it to reasonable tolerances with a drill press. *Lady Bug's* traveler, gin pole pivot, spar carriers, kicker pad and lifting handle, to name a few are all homemade from this material. Heck, even the business end of the worm gear driven boat launcher on the trailer is made of the stuff. Your trailer doesn't have a gear driven boat launcher? Well, let me show you mine.

Actually, I'm going to finish talking about mast raising first. Then we'll get into the trailer stuff.

My first effort at "simplicating and adding lightness" to *Lady Bug's* gear involved the idea that I should be able to raise the mast from outside the boat. I figured that it would be safer to stand beside the boat while slinging that heavy aluminum pole into place. Some folks with swing-keel boats may find this useful. As it turned out, standing on a ladder alongside a keelboat wasn't as efficient as standing in the cockpit and companionway. Some folks use the trailer winch to pull the stick up into place. That works. But, if you are going to lower the rig to get under a bridge, or at the dock or anchored out someplace, it's not likely you will have the trailer along with you.

So, I use a sheet or halyard winch to work the gin pole through a two-part tackle. The gin pole fits in a homemade socket that also shares the same pivot bolt as the mast. The mast has a rounded polyethylene bearing that allows the mast heel to roll into place. Believe me, the first couple times I tried to tip the square end of the extrusion into place I thought I was tearing the thing apart. The grinding, grating and bending were rather unseamanlike.

Some folks use the forestay to raise the mast. I discovered that the mast on most 25' and under boats is stiff enough to raise with a pennant attached at the spreaders or even lower. This permits that line to become an inner forestay or baby stay when the mast is in place. And, equally important, the forestay can be released and stowed without the mast falling over backwards. Conversely, the gin pole can be rigged while the forestay is still in place. Once you have seen the results of, or worse, participated in, the uncontrolled dropping of a mast, you tend to get real conservative real fast.



Plastic piece is gin pole and mast pivot. Gin pole comes out and stows below. Boom is still stowed in chocks behind tabernacle. Green lines are tails of inner shrouds (since changed to fixed wire/turn buckle). Multi-part purchase to right is combination gin pole guy and inner forestay. Hatch on left folds up. Still using Harbor Freight plastic tape for hinge gaskets.



Two views of stemhead with green line used as forestay adjuster. This contraption also works as an adjustable hold down for mast when stowed in chocks to port side of bow pulpit. White dacron two-part is gin pole/mast raising line that leads to a cabin top halyard winch. Pole and associated lines are all stowed/tensioned when boat is underway.



Gin pole rigged for mast lowering. Forestay still in place. This is what Christmas looks like in Chula Vista, California.





Look Ma! No hands. Mast started down. Mast and pole are secured from slewing sideways with individual whisker stays—everything must pivot on same axis as mast and gin pole. A very hard lesson in geometry! This allows time to stop action and clear the inevitable fouled halyard/stay/lifeline, etc, without dropping the mast on your head.

Mast lowered into crutch/roller. First step is to remove gin pole and lifting lines. Then mast pivot is removed. Mast then rolls forward until ready to stow. Shape of roller fitting allows for mast to avoid “capsize” while moving. Also, it resists wire shrouds and halyards from snagging and catching in rollers. Another in a long series of trials and failures.



A final gotta do to raise and lower a mast properly, is to have either installed lower shrouds or an auxiliary pair in place, that share the same axis as the mast. Anything different will either be too loose to do the job, or try to tear itself apart during part of the mast’s arc. *Lady Bug*’s setup includes a secondary set of inner shrouds terminated on the cabin top through wire-to-rope tails that run through small blocks and are tensioned with the cabin top halyard winches. These tails are held with poor man’s sheet stoppers (clam cleats ahead of the winch). They hold quite well, but take a bit of effort to release from the cleat after they have been pulled tight. Later this simplified back to conventional turnbuckles pivoting on eye bolts. These shrouds keep the mast from slewing off to one side or the other when halfway up or less. It’s such a helpless feeling to watch your mast bend like a bamboo fishing pole with a big fish on. Worse, if it ends up over the next guy’s boat to the side, while parked in the rigging area of the launching ramp. I understand most of those metal flake guys carry guns.

To make things a bit more systematic, I have the gin pole raising line and whisker stays as well as the other mast control lines all led to the companionway. That way I can roll the mast into place, attach everything, and crank the stick vertical all while stand-

ing in the cabin hatch. Like I said, walking around on the deck of a little boat a fathom off the launching ramp can be bad for your health. This is another argument for being able to raise and lower the rig while the boat is in the water. The fall overboard is shorter, and the eventual landing is, hopefully, softer as well. My only official trip out onto the foredeck is to attach the forestay. It attaches to a four-part tackle with its own jamb cleat. All these strings hook up with snap shackles avoiding the dropped split ring and out-of-reach turnbuckle wrenches.

Lady Bug recently got a new used Hobie 14 main, complete with full battens. Only problem, the stock 19’ mast wasn’t near long enough for a 21’ luff. And, the excessive roach precluded a backstay. So, in addition to adding a 22’ mast, the upper shrouds had to move aft to take the job of the backstay. With the baby stay and mast-raising lowers in place, I decided that the original lower shrouds and spreaders could go to the spare parts bin as well. Since I was already drilling lots of new holes in the taller mast extrusion, I put in internal halyards. Oh yeah, I had also horse traded for a small asymmetrical chute a while back. So, since the new rig was going to be fractional anyway, I added a spinnaker halyard near the truck (internal as well).

If I can add mag wheels and a hood air scoop to a Pinto station wagon and call it a race car, I suppose I can rig a full-batten beach cat main and spinnaker to a pocket cruiser. She definitely has the makings of a sleeper. The taller mast isn’t all that much heavier than the original but when you add nearly 10% to the length of a lever things can get a lot tipper. She sure points and reaches a whole lot better with the new rig. And leeway close hauled is substantially reduced (mostly due to the improved airfoil shape from the full battens. There are a lot of strings sprouting all around that little boat, though.

And, some changes were in order for the rudder, to deal with increases in heel-induced weather helm. One, perhaps novel, idea is a tiller extender that also sits at a small angle when deployed. It is easy to forget that a longer tiller will swing in a wider arc; which leaves it planted in your face when carried off center. We’ll talk about rudder mods in a bit, right after we talk about trailers, that is.

I can hardly wait to tell you how my brainstorm over making the rudder into a kick-up arrangement that avoided a bulge and weak spot at the water line came out. Like so many of these sub-projects, it started with a small pile of parts that I got at the salvage store, the plastics store, the metal store, the industrial fasteners store, and my “someday spares” from storage. And, of course, some of the stuff was sitting on the shelves at Roger’s store. But, like I was saying, let’s talk about trailers for a bit, first, then the boat’s interior and, finally, discuss how to make the boat sail better, and be generally more responsive.

Lady Bug was born a bit of a hermaphrodite. She sports a fixed keel of unknown ballast ratio. Yet, she must live most of the time on a road trailer, and be launched and landed without a crane or inordinately deep water. There are precious few 16’ boats around that don’t get at least some of their lateral plane from a centerboard, dagger board, or swinging ballast keel, or lately, a “winged” keel. It appears to be “NACA modeled” and does an admirable job of lifting. But, the darn thing is only about 20” from root to tip. Not a lot of wing surface.

Nonetheless, this hull sits completely out of the water, and only about the lower 6” of the keel are immersed, when fully backed down the normal launching ramp. Much of this comes from a straight axle and keel shoe that sits several inches above the axle. Another obstacle I have had to deal with, and I suspect many others have, or will sooner or later, has to do with tire size. The 13” wheels that come standard on lots of smaller boat trailers don’t allow for tires with sufficient load capacity.

So, other than adding a second axle which would have totally messed with the existing roller system, my only available solution was to increase wheel size and thereby tire load capacity. Yep. That brings the dang trailer even higher out of the water, and even more difficult to raise and lower the boat out of and into it.

Many of us with sufficient sea miles astern to see the value of “smaller is also lighter and smaller is, well, easier on the back and knees and wrists and...” All the other neat things about a smaller boats pretty much fold into one question, “Can I launch this rig and recover it without asking anybody for help, and without hurting myself?” At the same time, most of us want a boat that feels substantial under us. Not ponderous, just capable and even a bit forgiving of our occasionally misplaced weight.

You know. It ain’t gonna’ roll over, or get caught in stays, or broach on every little unplanned gybe, and stuff like that. And, to get a boat that feels and behaves that way will normally require a moderately heavy displacement. *Lady Bug* weighs in about 1,500lbs. Trailer and “extra stuff” brings the total to 3,000lbs. All this weight requires mechanical advantages, planning, and some plain old seamanship to move it all around without needing to dip into the “Combat Motrin” stocks regularly. So, I began to mess with an otherwise pretty good trailer.

My goal, and I recommend this one to everyone, was to be able to launch and land the boat from a standard ramp not only by myself, but without getting my shoes wet. Granted, this is a tall order, but, consider all the cut feet, slips, and dips that you see emanating from a day watching people launch and land boats. A guy just doesn’t want to watch his boat floating off unsupervised, while he has to staunch the blood from a sliced foot. He probably doesn’t want to have to crawl into his car or truck covered with slime from a slip and fall either. So, I think it’s worth considering some of these modifications.

I admit to being a more visual learner than one given to completely developed plans and pre-measured conclusions. As a result, much of what I have created on the trailer was not only trial and failure; it was often complete blunder. I won’t trouble you with the dead ends and startovers.

Starting with the tow vehicle, I have settled on “Big Ole” a no-longer-young half-ton Chevy Van with 170,000 miles behind him. He carries a rudimentary camper ensemble complete with a regular household recliner chair. That chair is a thing of real wonderment when a guy needs a short power nap to keep driving another couple hundred miles before quitting for the day. I don’t hardly ever sit still and watch TV or anything like that, when I’m home. But, a 20 minute pause in my “homeless chair” is an absolute lifesaver out on the road. Anyhow, the van has any number of shortcomings as a real RV. But, it seems to suite this solo traveler seeking ad-



A very shallow ramp. Launching Lady Bug single handed, without lifting, shoving, or getting my shoes wet.



Just enough water depth to float the keel. Actually, Lady Bug is sort of sitting on her keel here. I had to off load everything heavy to get close enough to reload. One of the lessons that led to a raised receiver hitch.

venture with a sailboat in tow.

I rigged a step aft of the right rear tire, and added non-skid tape to the back (still in the era of chrome and steel) bumper. The idea is to back to the water's edge, without actually getting the truck tires in the water. Waaaaay better for maintaining traction. So, I can step from the ramp, to the step, to the back bumper, to the trailer tongue platform literally without stepping in the water. At this point my normal routine is to leave the truck in park with the emergency brake set and (the ONLY time I do this) the keys in the ignition. I don't think it's a good thing to keep the exhaust pipe pouring hydrocarbons into my nostrils while captive to the trailer winch and such. So, I don't leave the engine running, or the lights on for that matter.

In the event that I get separated from the rig due to injury or problems on the boat while away from the trailer it would be a shame that somebody else couldn't help out by driving the truck up the ramp and away from a rising tide, for example. I haven't had to resort to this help from a passing Good Samaritan yet. But, it's a rare launching ramp where *Lady Bug*, at least, doesn't draw a small crowd of curious folks. So I'd like to think that there would be somebody around who could help if needed. That is, if the keys are in the truck, and not out there someplace else in my pocket. And while on the topic of ritual, I also always turn the radio off and open the front windows when backing down a launching ramp. It would be a shame to back over or into someone or some thing because I couldn't hear a shouted warning. Just being careful.

There are a number of modifications to the trailer that don't have any direct bearing on how the boat actually launches and lands. I'll list a few here, before moving on with the

launch sequence. After a couple heart-stopping encounters here on Southern California freeways and long, steep, mountain descents I added trailer brakes. The electric variety was apparently cheaper, not so in final accounting, so that's what I installed. Now that *Lady Bug* has a complete marine electrical system with deep cycle battery, I added a "charging loop" as a separate conductor all the way from the truck battery, through a separate bumper plug (the one that runs the brake system), through a disconnectable pigtail to the boat's electrical panel. The notion here is that the truck will top up the boat battery when on the road; and the boat battery will be available to work as a house battery for the truck when the whole rig is used as a camper. I've never actually seen this in "factory stock" form, but it may be done that way someplace.

After nearly colliding with picnic tables, trash cans, and even trees, in a couple campgrounds while backing in late at night with the boat and trailer, I installed independent trailer backup lights. Attempting to get much visual definition from a right side (parabolic) mirror while guiding the starboard quarter of a boat some 50' behind and out there in the dark became a problem that begged for a solution. And, I have found that most friendly bystanders' shouts of, "Now turn it the other way! just don't help a lot when you aren't sure what or why they are warning you of or for. In addition, have you noticed that sailboats don't come to a square end, at least the ones that really sail, and there isn't a square corner to guide back past that unlighted picnic table?

Soooooooo, that's where the "Baja lights" came into the picture. Way too much amperage to run off the truck's back-up light system. This took another separate #12 AWG line from dedicated dashboard switches with idiot lights close by. Wouldn't want to have

'em on accidentally while running down the road. Also, I got a bit carried away with this notion, and actually extended the running rails on the trailer nearly to the boat's quarters. But, I'll come to the logic behind this in a moment. Anyhow, now there's a veritable flood of light available to back into those narrow holes one often finds to be the only parking place left empty, late at night.

Being a bit of a packrat, and with the Old Eagle Scout pretty evident, I'm heavy in the "Be Prepared" department. I added a toolbox to the trailer to hold yucky things like grease guns, polishing rags, 2-stroke oil, and the like. Of course, since the trailer has its own jack and extra bits of lumber to set it on with uneven road surfaces in mind, and a dedicated 12v tire inflater (doesn't everybody?), the box had to be big enough to hold all that stuff too. And, of course, no self-respecting boataholic can leave home without a few odd nuts, bolts, fairleads, blocks, extra line, chunks of plastic and hardwood to fashion an emergency bearing in the wilderness. You know, stuff like that. It all goes in the trailer toolbox. The trailer used to have two spare tires (you never can be toooooooo prepared, now can you?). Presently, I carry only one spare, and it is bolted next to the place where I carry the spare gas cans on the walkway from the winch platform to the catwalks along each side of the roller system. You do have catwalks on your trailer don't you?

So, back to the launching sequence. It hurts my sensibilities to even watch a guy back his boat down the ramp basically disconnected and slam on the brakes at the water's edge (or deeper most often) to get the boat to float free. Granted, it works most of the time. But, this isn't something a guy can do alone. And, I can give you a bucket of reasons why you don't want to do it with a fixed

Normal depth at normal launching ramp is about 20" at axle. Larger tires and wheels change that a bit, but raising tongue high at receiver hitch compensates well. Boat properly aligned with canoe paddle from bow pulpit. Working alone, next step is to climb out onto catwalk and winch the boat out of the water—with dry feet and aging spine unstressed. Toll box, spare motor mount, step stool, etc, later moved and/or added. Extra trailer-mounted ladder is there for times when stern of boat not accessible (storage, parking lots, camp ???)



keel sailboat. So, after I have backed down the ramp, and walked the circuitous route with my dry shoes, it's time to set the little girl free.

Because I have actually witnessed boats being lost from the trailer while ascending and descending boat ramps I don't rely on the winch ratchet brake to hold *Lady Bug* in place, really at any time. It must raise the hull from the water but that's all I expect from that hook and strap. First off, the hull is balanced forward to achieve the right amount of tongue weight (about 200lbs) and isn't really going to roll off the trailer without a bit of encouragement. To do this, I have added a tongue jack (upside down) to the winch mast. It has a carved plastic and standard rubber bow jaw combo that engages the stem post and achieves both enough friction to lift and enough slip to change angle. I crank on this worm gear device until the hull has tilted enough to start the stern floating. It's pretty much what you get from a breakaway tongue arrangement. Only, since I'm standing on the trailer tongue at the time, I don't think a jack knifing tongue would be much fun to try to stand on.

As the boat starts to float, she's also starting to slide quickly away from me and the trailer. Since I want to climb aboard the boat and paddle her to the loading dock, it is way better to keep the bow close to the trailer. And, too violent of a surge actually smacks the trailing corner of the keel into the pavement. Ever wonder why the "back" corner of your keel is all smacked up? To do this trick, I installed a standard sailboat sheet winch to the side of the winch mast/platform. This works only as a snubbing winch. There just isn't enough power to actually pull the boat back onto the trailer. But, I can lower the boat inch-by-inch if need be. With a couple turns on the winch and a bight around the horned cleat, I can lower my near-ton of boat, motor, and a weeks' worth of Dinty Moore cans with thumb and forefinger.

I've already admitted to being sick the day they taught geometry at my high school. In fact, I didn't REALLY learn how to add and subtract back in grade school so mathematical things are always a problem for me. Shall we say, I do a lot of "estimating". Anyway, I have managed to haul and dump quite a few loads of rocks and soil and such in a wheelbarrow. The basic lesson of being a "barrow pilot," (you pile-it here, you pile-it there...) is that you can dump a load much more efficiently if you raise the handles than if you try to slosh the stuff out by stopping abruptly. This carries over to boat trailers too. Some have jackknife arrangements to tilt the rig and "dump" the boat off. Others, of course, use a longer tongue arrangement to get the boat deeper in the water. Me, I spent about \$35 at Harbor Freight and solved the problem of the too-shallow boat ramp. Consider this:

After testing ramps literally all over the western US, I have determined that the "normal" ramp will allow my trailer tire to be in about 2' of water when my truck tires are stopped at the water's edge. If you imagine an inverted right triangle, that makes the horizontal side about 16' (distance from water's edge to trailer axle). The vertical axis is the water available to float the boat off. And, nobody really cares what the hypotenuse is; because that's the distance down the ramp to where the trailer wheels are stopped. What we really care about is getting the trailer deep

enough to float the boat off. That's the real deal. Now, back to the wheelbarrow.

2' of water depth in 16', means that even another 8' of trailer tongue would only fetch another 1' of water at the wheels. And, an 8' tongue extension is quite a mechanical marvel. None of 'em are remotely simple to work with. A keel boat like *Lady Bug* doesn't really have more than the bottom of her keel wet at this point. Even in 3' of water there's no floating off. That is, until the stern hits the water. And, it's really pretty simple. Just raise the trailer hitch 6"-8" and the stern floats way sooner. It's just like delivering a load from the ol' wheelbarrow. And, of course, the getting back on is simpler too.

What I used is one of those "drop hitch-es" that normally make a jacked-up truck reach down to the trailer coupler. I just put mine on upside down. So far, I've towed *Lady Bug* about 10,000 miles with this rig. No real problems with tongue weight or braking geometry. These hitch receivers do come in adjustable form as well. They cost more than the fixed height one I bought, but that would allow for straight and level trailer tongues for road use if needed. The added benefit of this rig is that I don't have to disconnect the trailer for any of the process. Heck, I don't even disconnect the brakes or lights. All the lights, at least, never go under water. Granted, the brakes and their connections have to get wet. But, I figure, that the sooner they are moving after taking a bath, the sooner they dry themselves out.

My next project is to rig fresh water tanks on the trailer to flush the brake drums with, before heading down the road. The trailer as often as not goes from storage lot to ramp and back again without any place to flush either the brakes or the trailer frame. There's only one ramp here in San Diego County with a hose bib anyplace near the ramp. And, that one is actually for RVs emptying their holding tanks. Back to the launch sequence.

Now, she's sitting more or less like a ship entering a graving dock. The bow is held tight to the aft set of rollers. I can walk out the tongue platform, and down either side's catwalk and step onto the bow. If I remember to lay the canoe paddle out on the foredeck, (the memory really IS the second thing to go after the hearing) all I have to do now, is slip the snap shackle (left over from one of the bigger sailboats in my past) from the lowering line and j-stroke the boat over to the waiting dock.



Winch mast. Reassembled from existing pieces and bolts, right there on the street. Thing with white plastic end on pole is worm gear launcher. Mostly, its job is to push boat tight against retaining wires and chains when loaded for road. After accident in Montana, where truck and trailer landed on a sidewalk, boat distorted this assembly. Re-invented as a bi-pod to better distribute thrust loads on tongue beam. That re-build accomplished in a motel parking lot.



Winching platform. 2x10 solid lumber mounted on aluminum channel pieces that are u-bolted to new 3x3x1/16 steel tongue beam. Gray tubes feed ganglions of wires from hitch to distribution panels high up on trailer sides. Distro panel later added under platform to clean up electrical jumble.



Snubbing winch and (blue line) three-part tackle used to control speed of lowering boat from rollers to water.



Stainless pole more of a grab handle than support for winch mast. Turn buckles and wire were supposed to keep it all stiff. Failed in Montana accident. Now completely re-invented. Height and angle of winch critical to ease of retrieval. Two-speed winch a bow to Old Foggy status. In future, to be electric.



Hitch sits 8" higher (and blocks view of the license plate) to ease the float-off at shallow ramps. Electric brake plug to left, lights and charging loop/back-up light connection to right. All parts related to hooking up trailer to truck now mounted on driver's side of trailer. That one took a while to dawn on me. Had to move tool box, spare tire, tongue jack, etc, to make it work. Non-skid patches on bumper lead to step mounted aft of right wheel well for keeping shoes dry while launching/retrieving boat with truck backed to water's edge.

Yes, I could use the motor, but she moves quite nicely this way and is really a lot easier to manage at least for short bursts. I also normally return to the trailer with the canoe paddle. It just allows for such easy fine tuning that she almost always drops right into the waiting “V” of rollers. And, yes, the value of smugness when doing this alongside somebody with a mega-horse stinkpot is inestimable.

My loyal, but overburdened, trailer recently got a “second story” added. I got to wondering how I would fare with a strong sidewind or current to fight as the boat waited to be hoisted out of the water. So, what resulted, while overly heavy and really quite bulky, does in fact work. I’m now pretty sure that this whole apparatus could have been more fabricated from standard 2” PVC plumbing pipe and fittings. That would have been both lighter, and more flexible, certainly cheaper and easier to construct. But, when I was dreaming this one up, multiple 2”x4”s were all the designer seemed able to spec in.

The idea was to project sides running past the back end of the trailer frame and roller assemblies on which I can run spring lines to in order to keep *Lady Bug* squarely aligned in her rollers (while still afloat). There is the added bonus of having a place to mount tail lights up and out of the water and, certainly, this was a good time to remove some of the “spaghetti” that inevitably forms around 12volt wiring schemes. All the old butt connectors went the way of the trash can, and every circuit (there are about 10 or 11 of them, plus all the ground wires) is sorted out in terminal blocks on both of these wings and up under the tongue. It is so much easier to chase a broken connection, this way.

The entire wiring “harness” is made out of marine grade tinned copper wire. The normal multi-strand trailer (automotive) wire just seems to turn to dust when subjected to mechanical splices and terminal fittings, especially when dipped regularly in salt water. There are also secondary “bumper plugs” mounted out at the ends of these alignment arms that supply those pigtailed for the charging loop, and the auxiliary light bar that hangs astern of the rudder. There are at least 8 marker lights, 4 LED tail/signal/brake lights and myriad reflectors both on the trailer and boat.

I’d LIKE to think that these send an unmistakable message to other drivers. “I’m here. I’m probably moving slower than you are but, I’m here.” Of course, there are probably those who have exclaimed something more to the point of, “What in the hell is that contraption hauling a sailboat doing out here on this back road in the middle of the desert?” Mostly, people avert their eyes when passing. OK, so most people out on the highways of our land don’t even have the remotest interest in sailboats. I know, it just seems like life is so much more interesting if you’re at least interested. Know what I mean?

It probably takes longer to detail how it all works than to splash the boat and get her rigged. While I don’t seem able to break the 30-minute barrier, there are real disadvantages to doing things much faster, like forgetting steps, for instance. Like many of us, I invented this whole complex apparatus. Like many of us, I didn’t get it right the first time. Like many of us, I probably don’t have it exactly right even yet. So, it takes a bunch of paying attention to keep everything in its place and everything in its sequence. In fact, if I stay real focused and methodical I just might

avoid stopping at this or that stage and changing a bolt, or drilling a new hole, or re-routing a line. Like many of us, right? And, like many of us, I really like meeting people and talking about boats and other essential topics. Except it was at times like these that I have managed to forget to attach the forestay, or to hook the gin pole to the lifting tackle, and so on. Yep. All you gotta do, is stay focused.

In order to keep such a “big boned girl” nimble under sail as possible and able to ghost her way around the fluky winds endemic to mountain lakes in summer time *Lady Bug* just had to have a bigger sail plan. First I tried a couple of used mainsails that I had acquired someplace. I think one was a shortened down beach cat main, and another was probably a Lido 14 sail. These both required longer booms and different mainsheet gear and different outhaul tackle, and so on.

But, ultimately I decided that a full-batten main was the only way I was going to maximize lift and improve on pointing ability and, of course, SPEED. That’s where the Hobie 14 main came in. Yeah, taller mast, no backstay, inner and outer shrouds, adjustable inner forestay. I finally decided to set the sail loose footed, and added slugs to the luff rope for simplicity in raising and lowering such a big sail on such a small and really-getting-complicated cabin trunk. However, to get a pre-cambered sail out of its bag and onto a boom and luff groove takes a bit of doing.

Seems like those battens have minds of their own when attempting to lead 10 slugs into the groove and raise the sail without the spines grabbing life lines, dock lines, hats, ears, etc. But once up, that main course is a thing of beauty. It set real well, snaps into place like a rigid airfoil and holds its shape even when the wind is down to a whisper. We can maintain negligible leeway as low as 1/2kt boat speed. But, like everything, there was a tradeoff.

Yeah, the rudder was too small, the balance of the spade was now wrong, and the tiller was too short. That dang rudder was always a problem. Where do you stick a 5’ mahogany board with bottom paint on one end, pintles sticking out of one side that attack shins, gel coat, and berth cushions; and a heavy tiller attached to the top? I used to stick the whole shebang up in the cabin with everything else. That was way back before the recliner chair grew in the way. But the scratches, gouges, and bottom paint marks do still remain. Did I mention the “need” for an electric autopilot on this little ship? That one little innovation also had an effect on the rudder redesign project.

What finally emerged was the original rudder blade held in a pivoting “Star Board” and “Nylatron” case suspended on 1/2” s/s bolts tapped into the leading edge of the case and through the original gudgeons as if the pintles had been mounted permanently both from the top and bottom. The blade is allowed to float up and down in this case, and to change trim angles with a series of cams and stops. Basically, it comes up enough to allow for launching and shallow water operation when up, it rocks aft. Up, it is both shallower and no longer a balanced foil. As it is lowered, the cams force the leading lower “corner” forward and under the boat. It is also 6” deeper than originally designed. I got the effect of a significantly larger blade area with a significantly better balanced feel.

To augment this, the tiller grew to an absurd 6’. Yeah, a tiller a fathom long in a less than 3 fathom total LOA. It takes up the whole



Rudder in scabbard, stowed for launching/trailing. I leave ladder down while boat is on trailer, use with folding step stool for dry land access. The “wood pile” to starboard of the keel shoe is a guide made from fire wood collected at an Eastern Washington launch ramp, attached with deck screws to get boat to align with bow chock and hull rollers. Turns out, with majority of movable weight to port side, the boat hits the rollers asymmetrically. Another long, hard, lesson in solid geometry and physics. The problem with quick fixes, is that some of them remain years later—still working, but never pretty.

cockpit. But, mostly people don’t come sailing with me and when they do I put them in the companionway to keep them from getting tangled in all the lines, spars, and loose sailcloth flailing about. So the cockpit isn’t quite as crowded with stuff as it seems. As long as you don’t count mainsheet, jib sheets, gybe preventers, gin pole lifting line, halyards, gin pole whisker stays, anchor and rode led to a hawse in the transom, and poor man’s autopilot lines. Oh yeah, and there are a couple gas tanks and at least one utility coffee can someplace in the melee. Not real crowded, when everything is coiled and stowed.

Up to about 20kts of wind on the bow, *Lady Bug* will hold her own and rarely spins out. This is a thing of wonder on such a short and heavy boat. Almost power steering. Almost. The thing is that now the rudder accounts for easily half of the foil lateral plane area. The boat actually is relying on the rudder to be able to carry to windward so any time I let go of the helm, it’s gonna bring the bow upwind. Can’t avoid that little conundrum. Unless, of course, I have an autopilot to take over.

There is, also a fixed-end line and clam cleat arrangement that I call my Poor Man’s Autopilot. This does work like the commercial Tiller Tamer and traditional tiller combs. But, it has the added feature of anchoring the rudder when the boat is either rolling or thrashing at a mooring, or when the rudder needs to be secured for trailering. And, unlike the commercial alternatives, a little slack can be left in the lee side to allow for hands on adjustments without actually changing the line settings. Pretty slick, actually.

There are the obvious problems with using a real autopilot, like, “where am I gonna put something expensive and fragile and power hungry in a little boat with really limited cockpit seating and no electrical system?” Well, I managed to find a place to anchor a Group #27 wet cell battery down aft under the cockpit sole. The smart charger is mounted with the battery for a couple reasons that

seemed valid at the time. Only thing, now to check on the state of the charge, I have to pull the porta potty, tool box and can goods bin out to peer back into that black hole and see if the red LED has shifted over to the green one. And, I just about have to dismantle the boat to add water to the battery. Actually, the battery is mounted on a plywood “sled” that can be dragged forward and into the cabin sole to add water. Not simple, but it’s all in a good cause. Automated self-steering, of course.

Something else I’ve discovered over the years is that it doesn’t often pay to follow the directions on the box. Unless the guys that wrote those directions have actually sailed with me, they probably don’t really know what they are talking about. I tried to explain to the tech rep at Raytheon, that he REAL-
LY didn’t know what he was talking about, once. Now, I just keep that bit of information to myself. But, they don’t.

Here’s the deal: The most effective human helmsman reacts quickly to match pressure with pressure, and slowly to match movement with movement. My late father-in-law, who sired 12 kids, used to say, “don’t worry, they always come back.” I don’t think he was ever at the helm of a sailboat. But, if he had been, that philosophy would be about what works best. Respond minimally. Wait for the ship to right herself, through a period of oscillation. And, then add helm if she doesn’t “come back.”

The standard directions for tiller pilot installation, is to mount the pin 18” from the rudder stock. And, I say phooey. This arrangement almost always defeats itself on a spade rudder, high aspect sail plan boat, just about everyone now out there is sailing. Auto reacts too much, because at that close to the center of the arc even a teensy-weensy pull or push is too much, too soon. Then, the poor dumfounded tiller pilot gets into a hunting attitude that can spin the boat around in some conditions. And, a short boat like *Lady Bug* doesn’t have to get very far from the proper heading to lose balance and ultimately steering efficiency. So, what’s a fella gonna do?

Put Auto out where the rest of the helmsmen sit, that’s what. Do that, and all that marginally effective electronic amplitude damp-

ing becomes all but moot. Things settle down and run straight, until the wind gusts up, that is. Then, when I need to carry a bit of constant helm to balance things, Auto’s little thrust arm just isn’t long enough anymore (or too long, when on the starboard tack.) Since the wind hits both sides of the boat, adding one of those expensive little accessory thrust arm extensions really doesn’t help.

Whatcha’ gotta do is have a series of mounting holes arrayed across the cockpit seat so that you can move Auto to improve his reach. This is basically what we do when we have the helm in our own hands, lean in or lean out to keep a comfortable arm posture. Seems like the electronic crew should have about the same arrangement, doesn’t it?

So, there’s Auto taking up the starboard seat, and purring back and forth in about the same place where I would like to sit sometimes. Can’t have everything, now can we?

I’m still attempting to design an articulating tiller that can be biased away from the helmsman to either side. The idea is for better ergonomics for those consigned for long periods to the Tyranny of the Tiller. It’s not all that hard to visualize, just hard to build so that it’s strong enough and functional from materials and methods at my disposal. I guess you could say that he who owns the machine shop owns the solution; and the rest of us have to keep looking in the spare parts drawer. This idea would work for Auto as well. But, it is a lot of more moving parts to deal with every time I tack or gybe and want to sit on the opposite side of the boat.

As if the cockpit wasn’t already crowded, I really think that I want to put a motor well in the after end of the footwell. It would be soooooo nice to simply reach down and hit the starter on a fixed mount 4-stroke outboard motor waiting obediently to spring to life. This is in stark contrast to the aged 2-stroke, pull start, direct drive motor now hanging on the scissor bracket at the port quarter. The same old Johnson that only starts on the second pull, and only with the choke just right. The same motor that requires at least one knuckle busting per start by reaching beneath the stern rail and pulling past the stern light, VHF and mast stowage mounts.

Yes, it will be so nice to simply touch that start-er button next to my feet. And, wouldn’t it be nice to dock the boat without hanging over the stern to adjust the throttle while steering with my feet facing the wrong way, of course. A neutral and reverse gears would be nice too. All I want for Christmas is...

I’ve done preliminary tests, and am pretty sure the quarter knot lost to dragging a lower unit around is worth the tradeoff. Granted, there is more to it than simply cutting a hole in the bottom of the boat. Little things like the battery that will be needed to start the 4-stroke beauty that I don’t have yet, can’t stay where it is. It’s mounted right now right where the motor will be going. Yeah, details. But so much of this self-appointed problem solving is in the dreaming.

And, so the dreaming continues. What better place to do some of that dreaming, than in a reasonably comfortable recliner chair, especially if that recliner chair is in the cabin of my favorite little sailboat. Thus, I removed the factory installed compression post, and beefed up the cabin top to carry the thrust loads imparted by the mast and rigging. Then a sawzall made frightenly short work of the vee berth fiberglass. I just chopped out a major chunk at the confluence of the vee. C’mon now, nobody was going to sleep four people in this cabin, even if they were 3-year olds.

So, I cut the chair with the reclining back into the forward pair of putative berth flats. It folds down to cover the hole. And, now I pump up one of those pillow-topped air beds to create a single-berth sleeping cabin. To port is a small home-made cabinet, mounting a swing stove, waste basket, and a couple water jugs. Other than a monkey hammock that holds everything from toilet paper rolls to flare gun, that about fills that little cabin. I call it my fiberglass floating pup tent.

Not real big. Not real fancy. It does have cabin lights, VHF radio, a full electrical switch panel, bins for miscellany, and cooking gear interlarded with clothes and the basic emergency equipment. Not fancy but, it has been home in a lot of places, when I was far from home.

So many more holes to drill. So little time!

Full and by on a dreary Southern California spring day (May Gray/June Gloom). Moving at hull speed with new Hobie 14 main and storm jib (jib “borrowed” from Big Sister, Plum Duff.) Wind 8-10kts and gusty. Form stability and 400lb balast keel keep the little spit kit on her feet.



Haulin’ buckets on a blustery day. Tiller later grew to 72” with autopilot attachments, and cordage guys for securing rudder both at moorage and on trailer. Danforth anchor stowed in home-invented chocks on starboard quarter is off a 30-footer, chain and rode lead to hawsepipe in aft end of cockpit. Mainsheet traveller is mounted to stern rail. After many fancier inventions failed, traveller is now simple loop of kevlar line lubricated with candle wax. Main sail later mounted loose footed to “simplicate” rigging and improve sail shape. Lady Bug is a salty little girl.



Steaming

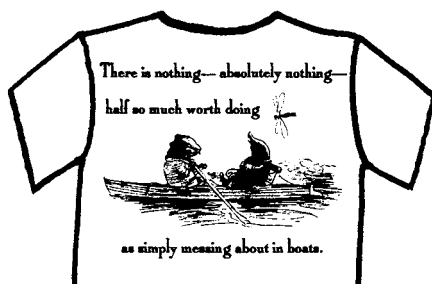
It is inevitable that sometimes the need for home improvements get in the way of boat building. In our household Mary and I try to redo or refresh one room each year. In January 2007, Mary thought we should strip the wallpaper from our powder room walls and paint. After many days of trying to think of every excuse as to why not tackle the job, I conceded that it should be done and agreed.

The first part of the job called for the stripping off of old wallpaper. I had an old steamer that I had used over the years with success. Unfortunately on this job it lasted for about 20 minutes before refusing to steam anymore. I guess it was older than I thought. OK, off to Home Depot to buy another steamer. Once at the orange giant I discovered that my old steamer was no longer made. I checked what was available and purchased one I thought would work well for me.

Back home and once again on the job I was quite impressed with my new purchase. It REALLY produced steam. Lots and lots of steam! So much steam that it got me thinking. It would be an excellent source of steam for bending wood. I would soon be steam bending some wood for the boat I was working on at the time. I never liked the tea kettle and propane burner set-up that many people use as a source for steam. While this method produces all the steam I needed, it still meant that I had an open flame in a workshop or garage. The wallpaper steamer also produces all the steam I need BUT no open flame. I liked that idea. I tried and it and it worked perfectly.

The steamer I use is the Wagner 705 Power Steamer. It has 1500 watts of power and uses one gallon of water. The steam time with one gallon of water is one hour and 25 minutes. It has an 11' hose that I run to my steam pipe (I use PVC pipe as my steam box). The steamer is equipped with a thermal safety fuse. If the steamer should run out of water the power will shut off before it gets too hot. The cost for this steamer is approximately \$55.

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From the Lee Rail

By C. Henry Depew

My 24-year-old teak handrails needed major attention. They were cracked in places, weathered, dry, and fungus covered. I finally got other non-cosmetic projects completed and decided to work on the handrails. My Sisu 26 has two handrails on the hardtop and two on the cabin top. Since they were the easiest to reach, I started with the two on the hardtop. Using my Stanley brace and screw driver bits I slowly backed out the stainless steel screws. All came out with no problem! Let us hear a cheer for the 1985 version of SS screws!

The next step was to treat the teak. The web has advertisements for a number of products for "reconditioning" teak. All looked quite involved and chemically messy. A friend, who does wood carving gave me a source of teak oil, I ordered a quart. After I received the container and read the instructions I emailed the manufacturer about treatment of very old wood. Their recommendation was to soak the teak in the oil until the wood stopped absorbing the teak oil.

How to soak 6' of teak? I asked the same friend about treatment of old wood. She suggested a short PVC pipe sealed at one end. Pour in the teak oil and soak the wood. A piece of gutter was also suggested. Either method would require more than the one quart of teak oil I had, so I went to the idea of soaking the wood in sections using an aluminum pie pan as the container and a "hard" sponge was the transfer method (while wearing disposable gloves). It worked!

Of interest was the pungent odor of teak oil. The smell filled the garage (offending the cats who live there) so I had to leave the sections outside during the day to dry out. Of course, it started raining in the afternoons which put the project back in the garage. The hardtop rails were finished and remounted in a week's time. The cabin top rails wait a couple of weeks for non-humid/rainy weather.

One interesting item concerning the teak rail renovation project was the capability of the end-grain balsa in the cabin and deck tops to reduce the area of "softness" around each of the screw holes. Regular plywood (and some fiberglass formats) allow for horizontal seepage of water from around a hole that is not properly sealed when the fitting is added. Horizontal rot slowly spreads from the hole resulting in the need to replace/repair a section of the wood/fiberglass around the place of penetration. With end grain balsa the damaged area is very restricted (as long as the end-grain balsa is vertical to the inner and outer coverings).

We took *Hirado* out to be race committee boat for the annual ABYC Vice Commodore's Regatta. Because of the tidal ranges there would only be one day of racing and we hoped to get in at least two races. The wind was 15-20mph from the north and the seas were a bit much. Nevertheless, we went out, anchored, and ran two races (gusts to 25 now and then). One of the boats involved in the racing broke a gudgeon and needed a tow back to shore.

Shortly after we purchased *Hirado* I installed two heavy-duty cleats amidships, both

to provide a place for spring lines at the dock and to provide towing points. I also created a tow bridle with a snatch block that would run back and forth along the bridle as the forces involved dictated. The reason for the amidship towing points was to allow the stern of the boat to move under the topline. Everything I had read on the subject of towing said not to tie onto a stern cleat as that would "anchor" that part of the boat and reduce the maneuverability of the towing vessel.

In this event, the crew of the sailboat tossed us a line, I tied the line to the pelican hook of the snatch-block with a bowline, and we headed north towards shore. *Hirado* has a 100hp Westerbeke Diesel and a working pitch propeller. Even so, I had the rpm at 1,800 to 1,900 to get two knots of forward speed in the wind and wave conditions. As we reached closer to shore the wave size decreased and we were about to get up to about four knots of forward speed (according to my GPS). We had a successful tow back to calm water at the entrance to Shell Point where the tow was cast off and the boat proceeded, using its small outboard, to its dock. In all the years we have used *Hirado*, that was only the second time I needed to rig the tow bridle. But it was very nice to have everything ready when needed.

Another aspect of towing is the launching of the boat from the trailer at the launch ramp. I am sure every reader has a story about launching/recovering a boat or has watched someone else's problems. We carry about 15' of 1/2" chain in the hearse with chain hooks at both ends. It was originally created to launch and recover our Sisu 22 at the local ramp when the tide was not sufficient to launch with the trailer attached to the hearse. We would block the trailer, set up the dolly wheel, unhook and add the chain, and then unblock the trailer and either launch or recover the boat.

The other day I needed the chain to help a neighbor who had stuck his truck in a swale. The ground was so soft we ended up with a four-wheel drive vehicle to make the pull (almost stuck the hearse in the wet, soft ground). The chain is seldom used any more for launching, but like the tow bridle on the boat, it is nice to have when needed.

A recent problem was that *Hirado's* stuffing box would not set up properly. It is supposed to drip when the shaft is turning and not drip when the shaft is not moving. A very small, slow drip when the boat is at the dock developed. Adjusting the packing nut did not do any good. Thus, there was the question of replacing the packing material with the boat in the water, the boat aground on a low tide, or pull the boat and replace the packing. I asked around and received a variety of answers. In the end I elected to have Mr Glover, an excellent engine and general boat mechanic, check things out with the boat in the water and change the packing if necessary. Since there was a good deal of room around the packing nut in the bilge, he was able to slide the nut back, remove the old packing, install new packing, and put the nut back in place with the boat floating at the dock and the bilge pump removing the water that was coming in around the propeller shaft.

The next time we take the boat out I will need to adjust the nut so I have a slow drip when underway and no drip with the propeller shaft no turning. Ah, the never-ending joy of owning a boat! There is always something to do.

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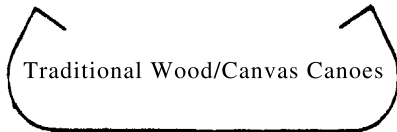
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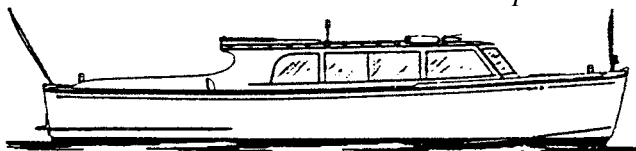


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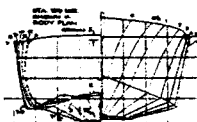
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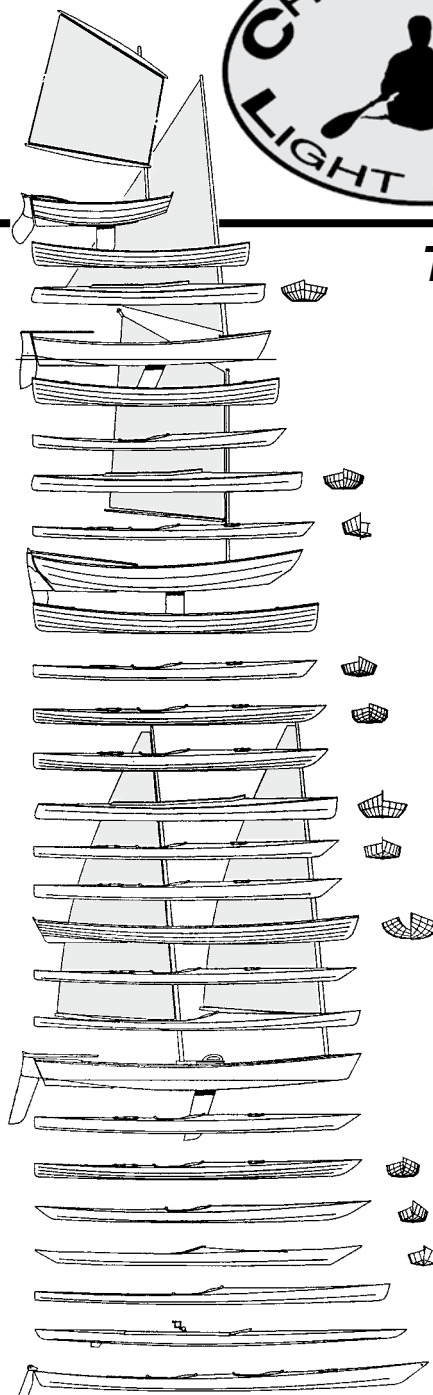
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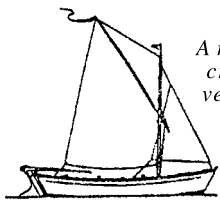
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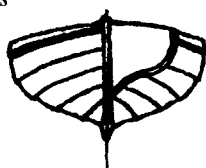
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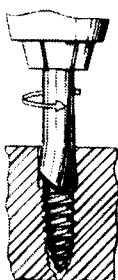


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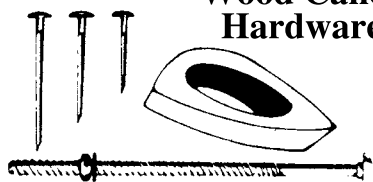
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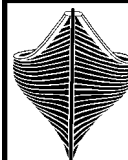
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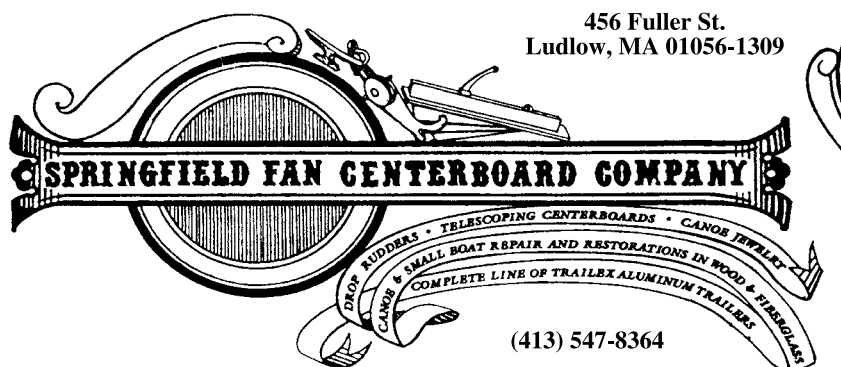
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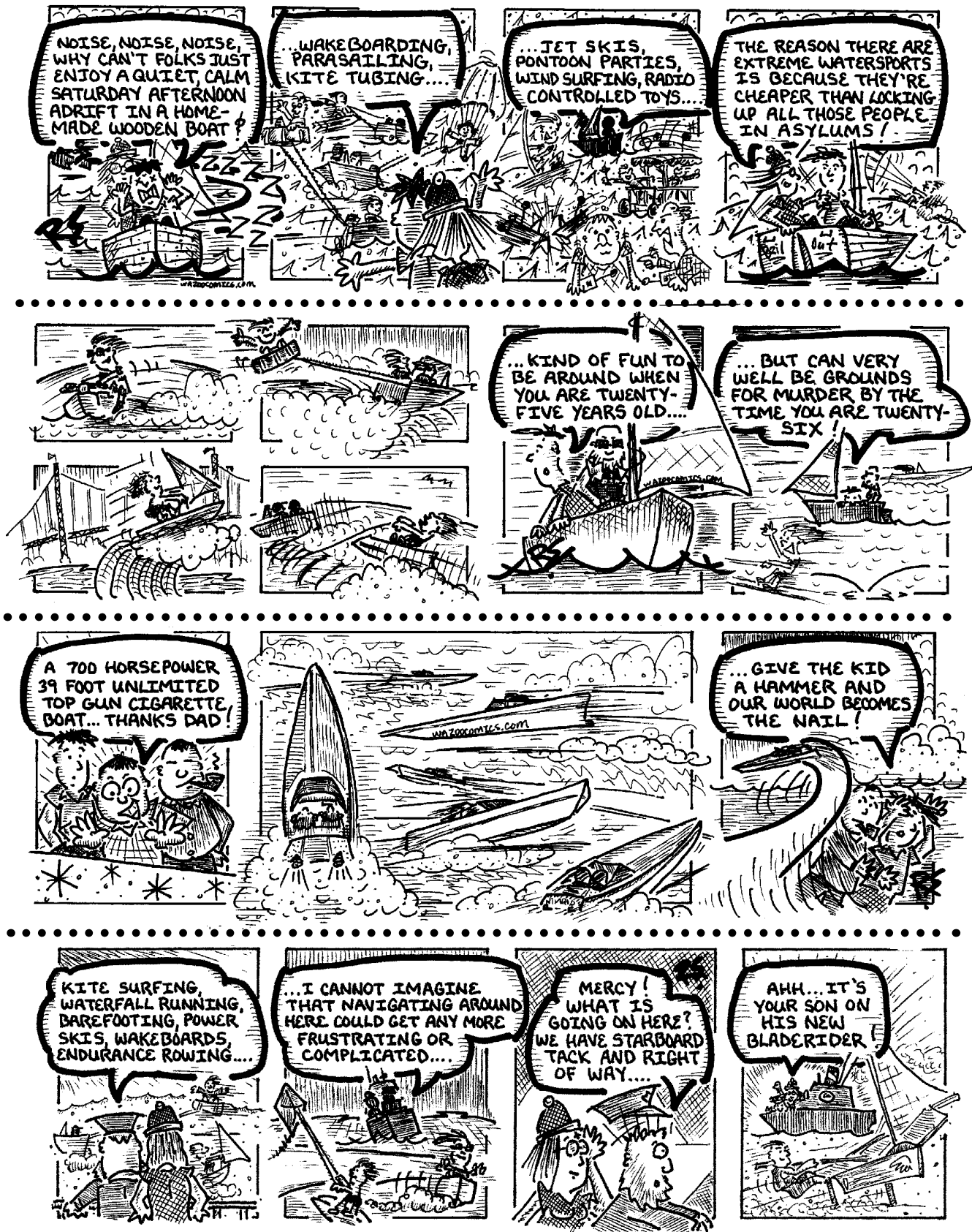


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